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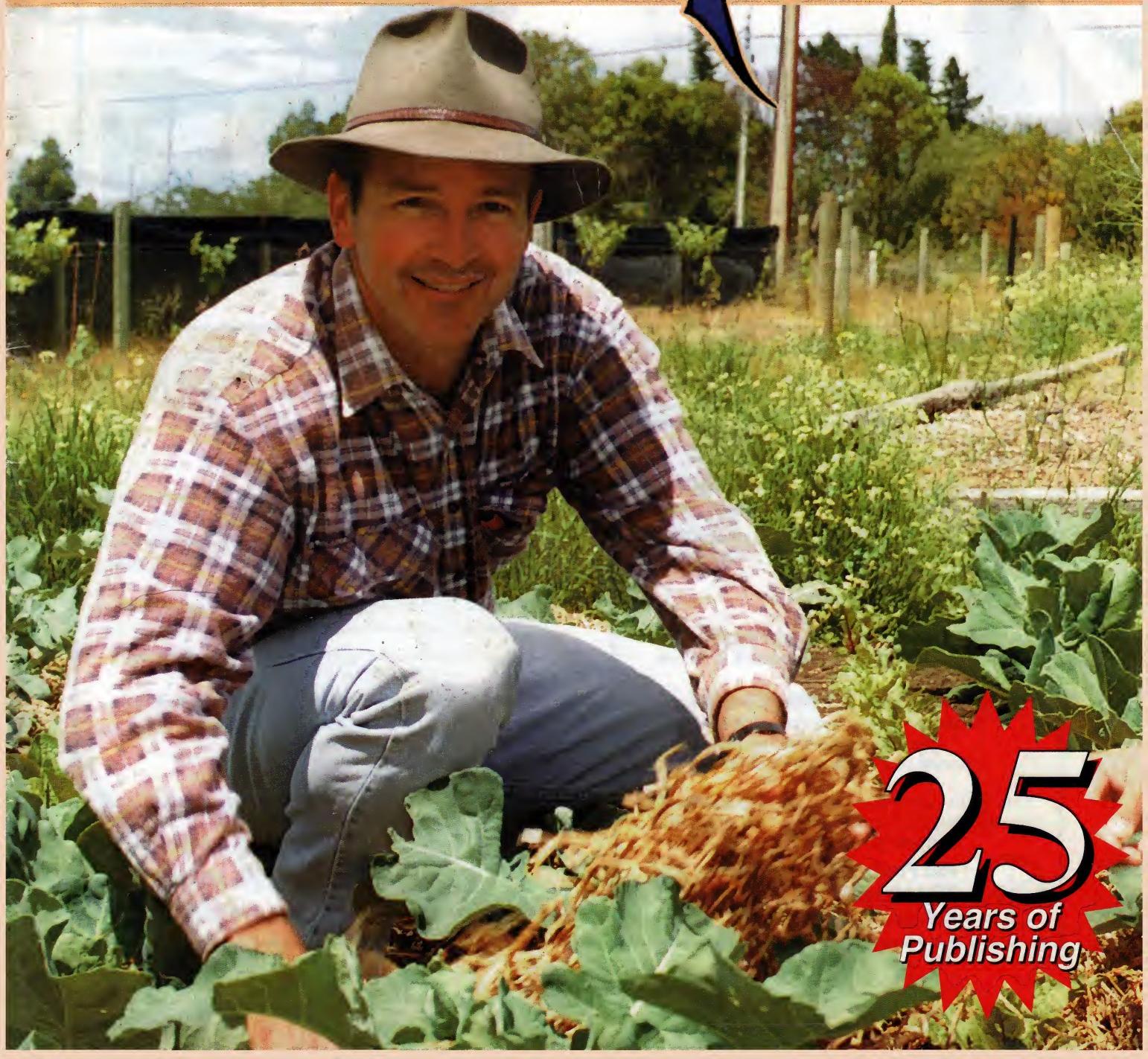
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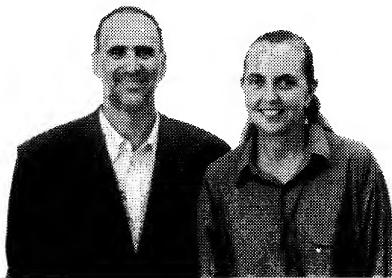
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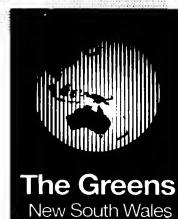
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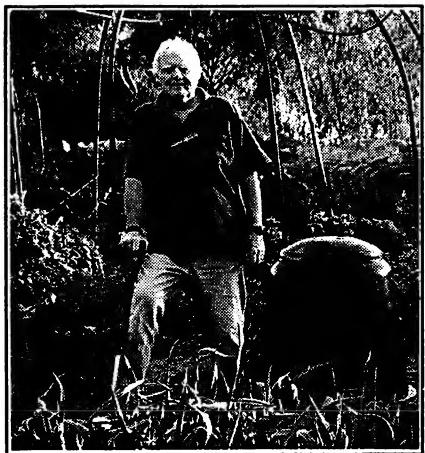
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COVER PHOTOS

Front Cover: Over the last ten years, Tom Deer has patiently constructed a sustainable lifestyle in the Adelaide Hills, in South Australia, which creatively combines most of his interests. Read Mark Mackay's article about Tom on page 6. (Photo Mark Mackay.)

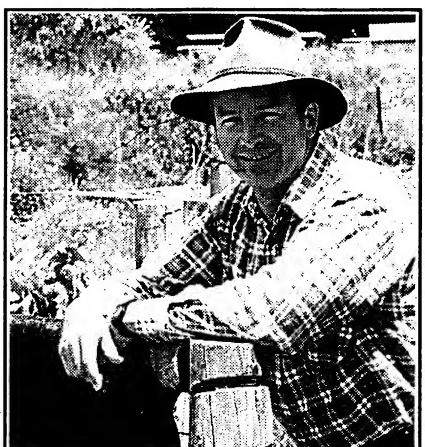
Back Cover: Yes, readers do meet through *Grass Roots*, and sometimes lasting relationships result. I'm sure all of us wish Leslie and John Ardon all the best for the future. Read their touching story on page 17.

Edited by Megg Miller and Mary Horsfall.

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Our post box is always full with mail, but each December it reaches bursting point because of the wealth of cards that come in. It's lovely to receive reader's seasonal wishes and catch up on the year's activities.

The Christmas post delivered an extra bonus – cards from a number of people who in the past had worked at *Grass Roots*. We keep in reasonably regular contact with Chris, Gail, Celia and Marg and so know what's happening in their lives, but it was a tremendous thrill to hear from Kath Harper, our editor from No 61 to No 79, and Jan Ackeroyd, who was my assistant back in the early eighties. I had to cheat a little and look back over past copies to establish when exactly Jan and Kath worked with us. Looking through past issues evoked nostalgic memories of happy times with these people, many of them nicely chronicled in this column.

Goodness, you're lucky to have Gumnut Gossip this issue because once I started dipping into long-forgotten stories time ceased to exist. It must be wonderful for new readers to discover the treasure trove of back copies, but however do people discipline themselves to carry out mundane jobs like feeding the chooks and making mud bricks when there is a pile of back copies beckoning?

When we first moved into the new office there were some moans and groans about being indoors all day and that the air conditioning caused headaches and sinus problems. No one is complaining now that summer is in full swing and if forays into the outside world need to be made they are completed in the shortest possible time. The current hot weather is tiresome and without air conditioning we simply couldn't work. It certainly makes you consider how people managed in the past, especially when more formal clothes were worn. It's rather sobering to realise that for a long time the fuel stove was the only facility for cooking and that the family wash was done in the boiling copper. How did our forebears put up with these privations and do a day's work outdoors as well?

One of the most frequently asked questions in incoming mail is how have we settled in now that we've been in the

new office for a few months. The answer unanimously is it's getting better and better. Of course we still can't find things and there are still a few boxes to be unpacked, but on the whole it's a more comfortable, professional existence. There was a nasty hiccup the day Catherine boiled the jug and poured out a very large black spider. The poor creature must have come in amongst the tea bags or cutlery and sought refuge in the closest, darkest object. Its unexpected appearance has made us all wary when searching through boxes of folders and books. One very pleasing characteristic of being located in a busy town is the availability of recycling facilities and we are able to separate some of our rubbish and recycle it. Anything edible goes home to the pig so all in all we feel we're making a difference.

It is a few issues since we initiated What's Special About Your Locale? and we are surprised at how popular it is. The contributions make fascinating reading and it is an ideal way to be introduced to little-known corners of this sprawling country. Few of us have the time or opportunity to travel regularly so it's handy to have someone do the sleuthing for us. No doubt some of the favourite places described will go onto lists of places to be visited. Because Your Locale has been so well supported we will continue the page for a couple more issues. In the next two months we have the unenviable task of choosing the contribution 'that most makes our office of would-be travellers want to get up and go there'. Look out for our winner next issue.

Whilst on the topic of travel, our favourite wanderer has returned after a few adventurous months and found her way back to GR. Yes, Kim arrived home late in the year and called in to inspect the new office and show us her photos. One thing led to another and she has returned to work with us. One curious incident she mentioned was being stopped in the street in a Queensland beach town and recognised from her photo in the August GR!

You may not identify Karen Long, whose story is on page 47, from amongst the young people on the cover of number 25 because it was taken when she was in Year 10. Karen is one of the few who can

boast and prove they are long-time readers. It's a great compliment to a magazine to capture the interest of a young person and have them become a regular reader from such an early age. You will love Karen's Reader Story, and it is ironic that just before we went to press we received a letter to say change was imminent. A knee injury has necessitated an enforced period of rest for Karen's husband, with the result that Karen has taken up full-time teaching. The family will now be living on the outer Darling Downs.

Also received at the last minute was a poignant letter from regular contributor Pam Cole, asking for help. Pam's articles are always interesting, evocative and helpful, she is a real GR trooper. 'Poor Bill has been doing all my jobs for yonks, even the strawberry jam,' she wrote. 'First a big thank you to the GR folk who have sent kind notes and messages about articles published and those who say they have been enjoying the book; so heart-warming and good of you. And now to my first-ever request through these pages.'

'I have recently been visited by a bunch of unpleasant characters, namely Messrs Hashimoto, Sjogren, and the secretive-sounding MCTD. Added to long standing hypoglycaemia and recently acquired elevated heart-rate, they are proving pretty unwelcome guests! They are in plain words, Hashimoto's thyroiditis; Sjogren's syndrome; mixed connective tissue disorder; all are diseases of the auto-immune system, not infectious, and responding to some degree to the medication prescribed. My doctors have been great, family and friends wonderful. It is a long slow job however and it would be so welcome if someone could send tips on dealing with the above named, and their wretched physical and emotional side effects, until we have wrestled them into submission and shown all three the door.'

We hope Pam receives a deluge of helpful advice, and have every confidence that there will be at least a couple of readers who can offer practical assistance. Regardless of the problem there is always a GR reader or two who can help. That's what makes the magazine the best in Australia.

A VARIED LIFE

by Mark Mackay, Novar Gardens, SA.

Tom Deer has achieved his dream. Living in the Adelaide Hills, he successfully combines a self-sufficient lifestyle with his business and hobbies that are both personally and financially rewarding. As if this isn't achievement enough, Tom enjoys sharing his knowledge with others through teaching, both formally and informally. We hope this story of one man's energy and commitment will inspire others to pursue their dreams.

Conventional is not a word that springs to mind after you meet Tom Deer and discover how he lives and spends his time. Tom has been living in the Adelaide Hills on a small patch of land for the last ten years. Here he grows vegetables and grapes and has recently established a small fruit orchard. He also has a few bantams and pheasants, a beehive and a couple of dogs. To many readers of *Grass Roots*, there is no big deal in doing this. However, Tom has been able to achieve something that many city people dream about – leading a balanced life, doing what they enjoy most without having to wait until they have reached retirement before they can do it.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Tom started out on the traditional city career path, but after running his own small insurance broking business for some years decided to change his lifestyle. He had an idea that if he could move to Tasmania and set up a bed and breakfast he would also be able to pursue his passion of fly fishing. Tom's idea for the bed and breakfast involved being able to grow his own vegetables. However, he wasn't prepared to jump into the deep end and just pack up and go, but decided to increase his skills in preparation for the future.

The first thing that Tom did was to purchase a property at Ashton during 1988. This property was to have been

the training ground for Tom to determine whether he could learn to successfully grow vegetables organically before moving on to Tasmania to set up a bed and breakfast. When he first moved onto the property, the ground where the vegetables are grown was hard and almost barren. Not much would grow. How that has changed! The organic gardening has been a great success and Tom is still continuing to experiment and improve his plot of ground. He hasn't yet felt the need to move on to Tasmania either.

Tom still runs his insurance business, but this no longer occupies his full attention and his days are spent undertaking a variety of activities that have largely stemmed from his interest in self-suffi-



Tom with visitor, Enzo checking out the broad bean patch. Beehives in the background.

ciency and hobbies. Some of these activities even generate a bit of income as well.

THE ORGANIC GARDEN

Tom's patch of land isn't big in terms of Australian properties – it's about the size of two house blocks, or, in more accurate terms 0.3 of a hectare. On the property Tom has devoted space to various activities and needs. For example, there is the house, the shed, the pheasant and bantam runs, a couple of large water tanks, and the rest is garden. The garden can be thought of as being made up of several components: organic vegetable patches, grape vines, orchard, herb garden, trees, lawn and flowers (some roses and bulbs).

Organic gardening isn't a new concept to many people. Whether they choose to follow the principles of organics is, however, an entirely different story. Tom has divided his vegetable garden into four plots and grows vegetables for himself and a couple of other families using organic principles. He has grown silver beet, lettuce, leeks, onions, peas, snow peas, broad beans, broccoli, tomatoes, asparagus, pumpkins, zucchinis, carrots, swedes, to name just some of his past crops.

Adelaide has a predominantly temperate climate because of its proximity to the coast and its latitude. Despite the relatively modest geographical barrier presented by the Mount Lofty Ranges, a marked west to east rainfall gradient of 450–650 mm exists between the Adelaide Plains and the Mount Lofty Ranges (Griffin and McCaskill, 1986). Consequently, the location of the property ensures that it receives somewhere between 800 and 900 millimetres (or 31.5 to 35.4 inches) of rain per annum, while those living on the Adelaide Plains (such as myself) can expect to average approximately 450 millimetres (17.7 inches) of rain per annum. Not only does Tom get higher rainfall than those living on the Adelaide Plains, he also experiences substantially cooler temperatures, anywhere between five and seven degrees cooler than the Plains, depending upon the direction of the wind. The differences may be even greater depending upon where you live in Adelaide.

The cooler climate of Tom's property provides him with some advantages and disadvantages compared to those living on the Adelaide Plains. He

is able to grow winter vegetables pretty much all year round on his property, but has difficulty in growing some of the summer vegetables. During winter the ground is sufficiently cold that he doesn't need to harvest his root vegetables (or some of the other veggies for that matter) and store them in the refrigerator or freezer, but can leave them in the ground without them deteriorating.

Grapes

The climate in Adelaide is perfect for growing grapes. Tom has had merlot, chardonnay, cabernet and riesling varieties of grape established for two years now. From the vines running along the side of his property he obtains sufficient grapes to make some 120 litres of wine per year. He has recently planted the pinot noir variety to enable him to expand his wine-making activities in the future. Tom envisages that he should be able to produce 150 litres of



Tom with his two permanent wwoofers.

wine per annum once all the vines are producing at their maximum capacity.

Fruit Trees

The orchard is in its infancy and includes peach, pear, apple, persimmon, fig, mulberry, prune, olive, plum, apricot and nectarine trees. The space for the orchard was created when Tom removed some exotic trees from a corner section of his land. In order to encourage horizontal branch growth in preference to vertical growth, the fruit tree branches have been weighted down. The weights will be removed after the first year of growth when the direction of the branch growth has been

pretty much set. Tom has plans to enclose the orchard in netting, which will serve the dual purpose of keeping the pesky parrots off the fruit trees and serving as a pheasant cage. The pheasants should help to reduce the insect population and perhaps provide a bit of fertiliser too!

Herbs

The herb garden still exists, but is in need of some work. Tom has neglected this section of his garden in recent times, because it is located next to the orchard and part of his plans for establishing the orchard included relocation and rejuvenation of the herb garden. In the past he grew a variety of herbs including mint, chives, oregano, thyme and sage. As might be expected, the mint has continued to thrive in spite of Tom's neglect. In the near future, he hopes to try growing medicinal herbs as well.

Native Trees

Many native species of trees have also been planted on the border of the property. Tom has a number of reasons for planting these trees in place of the exotic species that were there when he purchased the property. The presence of native trees provides a haven for birds, koalas and insects, as well as providing a sense of bush beauty. Tom has found it particularly useful to attract blue wrens into his garden – they act as predators and reduce the insect pest population, but are small enough not to damage his plants.

WWOOFING

WWOOFing doesn't refer to the noise that Tom's dogs make when visitors arrive at the gate, but to a scheme called Willing Workers

On Organic Farms. Tom is a member of WWOOF and this is yet another of his activities. The WWOOF scheme enables people to travel around Australia (and also overseas) and learn about organic gardening and farming techniques at a relatively low cost. People such as Tom provide accommodation and food in return for a minimum amount of labour being undertaken each day. He has had visitors from various countries, including France, United Kingdom, Holland, Philippines, Japan and Korea, come and stay at his property. Depending upon their language skills and enthusiasm, they can learn about some of the basic or more

advanced tasks that need to be undertaken when maintaining an organic vegetable garden.

POULTRY

Tom keeps five bantams and five pheasants. The bantams are kept to hatch the pheasant eggs. Not only do these birds supply him with a source of fresh eggs and the occasional bird for cooking, but they also supply him with feathers. Tom tans the skins from the birds he kills and keeps the feathers to make the flies for fly fishing, another of his pastimes. He also obtains rabbit skins from a nearby property for use in fly making.

FLY FISHING

Tom's interest and ability in fly fishing and fly making has resulted in his designing new types of flies, some of which have been published in fishing magazines, such as the *Southern Fly Fishers Magazine*. He also organises and leads fishing trips to various locations in Australia and New Zealand for others wanting to learn the intricacies of fly fishing.

HELPING OTHERS LEARN

Teaching fly fishing and organic gardening to others also enables Tom to fulfil a desire to teach others about what he has learned and put into practice. Tom has taken his teaching skills further and, after recently completing his Bachelor of Business degree, he also tutors in marketing subjects at the University of South Australia – another of his varied activities.

TOM'S PHILOSOPHY

Tom places a priority on doing things that interest him, and of course, also pay him some money. Also, he hasn't lumped all of his eggs into one basket, so to speak. So how did Tom choose what

he wanted to do? It was really quite straightforward. He listed all the things that he liked doing: fishing, growing vegetables, meeting people, teaching etc, etc. He then grouped his interests into activities that went together as possible pastimes. For example, fishing, meeting people and teaching was one grouping, while organic gardening, meeting people and teaching was another grouping. From these simple groupings stemmed activities that he pursued.

Not all of his activities generate a direct income for him, but at least they enable him to fulfil his goals. For example, participating in the WWOOF scheme doesn't bring in any money (although he does get some work done), but this doesn't matter as it enables Tom to meet new people and also teach them about organic gardening.

Additionally, none of Tom's interests has become the sole focus of income. This means that he has some income insurance so that should one activity no longer be feasible, he merely expands another. Also, it means that his hobbies and interests remain just that and don't become his sole career. Strangely enough, Tom's work philosophy truly reflects the current sermon of many Australian managers to their work forces – become multi-skilled!!

So what's the pitfall with such an approach to work? Of course, there is no denying that being self-employed and trying to be self-sufficient in food have risks. However, Tom has established his way of life in order to reduce such risks to the best of his ability. Planning is obviously an important key to success, but then so is experimenting with new ideas.

According to Tom, describing what he does in response to the standard 'so what do you do for a living' question feels at times as though it's the hardest challenge

he is faced with. Rather than listing a whole lot of small careers, as he used to do, and getting strange looks in return, Tom now answers according to what he's doing at the time – some days he's a gardener, other days he's an insurance broker, a tutor, or a fly fishing guide.

Can Anyone Do This?

Is it necessary to have run your own business in order to do what Tom has done? Tom thinks not, but it does help to either have some land which you already own and are prepared to develop, or a flexible career that can provide sufficient cash and free time to enable you to purchase a property to develop. It did help that Tom's business had been successful, but clearly you don't need to be a millionaire to do what he is doing. It is within the reach of many people. You don't have to buy a big block of land to grow vegetables using organic principles – Tom didn't. Nor do you have to give up the mainstream job either. Admittedly, it does help if your employment situation is congenial towards part-time work though, as this can provide a steady stream of income to enable other projects to be pursued and pay for the necessities that can't be produced by the individual.

Spare Time?

So what does Tom do in his spare time? He also brews his own beer and stout, bakes his own bread and biscuits, looks after his bees, umpires football . . . he packs a lot into a very interesting and varied life.

Notes and References

WWOOF can be contacted at WWOOF Australia, Mt Murrindal Co-op, Buchan, Victoria 3885, ph/fax: 03-5155-0218.

Atlas of South Australia, T Griffin & M McCaskill (editors), 1986, South Australian Government Printing Division.

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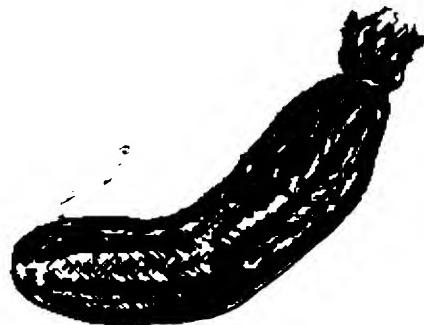
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OWED TO A ZUCCHINI

by S Wilson, Gippsland, Vic.



I have certain shops to which I am addicted, namely book shops, fabric shops and nurseries, to name the most addictive, so it comes as no surprise that I met my Waterloo in one of these shops – the nursery.

I'd rambled around the roses, peeped at the perennials, looked at the lavenders and eventually sidled up to the seedlings. I picked up a basket thoughtfully provided by the proprietor and put punnets of plants quickly into it. There were silver beet and squash, pumpkins and primulas, and what are those cute little plants? Zucchini, 'Black Jack'. Looks like a little marrow, but sounds like a marauding 'baddie' from a Western.

Might as well try them, so into the basket they go and home to be lovingly planted in richly manured, fertile soil, surrounded by lashings of mulch to keep the weeds down so that they don't overrun my new little seedlings. Just three little leaves, looking healthy, but not really robust.

Well, sometimes appearances can be deceptive. The little plants grew and grew with astounding rapidity and I wondered on occasions if the 'Jack' in 'Black Jack' was related to the Jack of beanstalk fame.

And then the flowers: blowzy, flamboyantly bright orange and numerous. Beneath each flower, a tiny green zucchini. My excited comment, 'There'll soon be enough for a salad,' seemed somewhat inadequate in light of following events.

The tiny vegetables, almost in hours it seemed, became enormous and not only were there enough for a salad, but for zucchini pickles, zucchini bread, zucchini slice, grilled zucchini, boiled zucchini, stuffed zucchini, fried zucchini, zucchini wine, zucchini soup and crumbed zucchini.

My husband has become a little strange of late, I think. When I say beguilingly, 'I've made a lovely zucchini slice for breakfast/morning tea/afternoon tea/dinner/supper,' he moans and runs away into the shed and hides. I do hope he's not becoming reclusive.

I also don't think he feels so well

these days. I noticed the other day that his skin has a slight greenish tinge, almost zucchini green, I thought. His shape is changing too, more elongated, if you know what I mean?

Our friends, or perhaps I should say ex-friends, are also acting in a peculiar way. They seem to avoid me, when they see me coming, and the huge basket of zucchinis I'm always carrying gets unbearably heavy when I run after them, sometimes for a kilometre before I catch them. They grimace then, I suppose with embarrassment at my largesse, when I insist they take the whole basketful of zucchinis. Perhaps they haven't met with such unselfish giving before.

Animals too can sometimes be most ungrateful. I try to make the dog's dull old meat more interesting by adding zucchini in a ratio of fifteen of zucchini to one of meat and the stupid dog turns her nose up at the feast, and the cats are the same. No appreciation of good food.

The chooks are no better. Chooks need green feed, now that's a known fact! But will they eat the zucchinis? No! And their egg production has dropped right off too, useless creatures. Just because the mounds of zucchini cover the nests, they seem to take that as an excuse not to lay!

I wonder if my husband is becoming a little neurotic. He has actually issued an ultimatum: 'Either the zucchinis go or I do.' Now, I love my husband despite this revelation of his latent jealous streak. He says I never spend any time with him these days. How can a dear, simple, little plant displace him from my affection? What a foolish idea.

Anyway, I've discovered another use for zucchinis. They make wonderful compost, but what to do when the six two hundred litre drums I use for making compost are full? I suppose I could start a compost heap on each corner of the garden as well, to use this bountiful resource.

I think my husband's jealousy is seriously threatening our marriage, so we've reached a compromise. If I pull out all the zucchinis this year, now, and agree to plant only one plant next year, he'll stay.

Well on reflection perhaps fifteen plants was a few too many, but as I pull them out reluctantly, I console myself by thinking of all the extra compost they'll make.

ZUCCHINI SALAD

3 kg zucchini, cut into cubes
2 large onions, sliced
 $\frac{3}{4}$ handful salt
1 large capsicum, sliced into small pieces

Place these ingredients together, with water to cover, boil until tender. *Do not overcook*. Drain and run cold water through.

Cook 500 g pasta shells in salted water, drain.

Boil:

7 cups vinegar
5 cups sugar
1 heaped tsp mustard or mustard seed
1 heaped tsp celery salt
1 heaped tsp turmeric
1 large tin red kidney beans

When boiling, add pasta and zucchini. Briefly reheat and seal in screw-top jars. Makes about six large coffee jars. Keeps well on pantry shelf.

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SHARING IDEAS

by Poppy Hollitt Meadows, SA.

I've been reading this magazine for some time now and I still enjoy *every* issue.

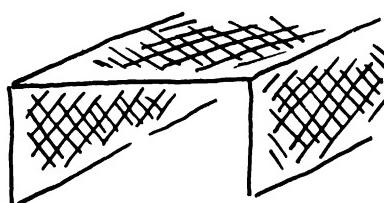
I've had a lovely time bottling this year's fruit. I've got hundreds of bottles of tomatoes, apples, apricots, nectarines, peaches and pears. Now I'm hanging out for the quinces! They are wonderful bottled.

The vegie patch is starting to repay us for all the tender loving care we give it, and we're enjoying the beans, basil, aubergines, lettuce, corn and cucumbers. We've had sweet peas and cosmos for cut flowers as well. Quite a few Butternuts have set with lots of human pollination help (the bees seem to be on a permanent holiday here!). There's lots of capsicums hanging on the plants, but still too small to pick.

Autumn is the time to start thinking about planting peas, broad beans, garlic and the brassicas, but I don't know where I'm going to put them. I was a bit overenthusiastic and planted too much of everything of the summer crops and now I don't know where I'm going to fit the cool weather crops. I haven't got the heart to pull anything out while it still looks green and lush. What was that I read about hanging baskets? I've got my

eye on the front lawn!

Jan Leonard of Dulacca wrote that she was having a problem with cats ruining her vegies. Perhaps she could try making some little wire cages to protect them until they get strong. I have to do that with peas and lettuce as the birds here can eat them completely. I make cages that look like this.



Don't make them too long or they will be hard to handle, and obviously they need a piece of wire at each end as well. I find about 630 millimetres is a manageable length.

She also requested an idea for preserving excess vegies. I came across a good tip some time ago and have successfully bottled many vegies such as snow peas, sugar snap peas, beans, broccoli, cauliflower, asparagus, and okra. You can bottle any vegies safely, including mushrooms, if you use a

simple acid solution. This solution will keep vegies perfectly and safely for years. It is made up of one dessertspoon of common salt and two tablespoons lemon juice to each one litre of water. The water is boiled first, then the salt and lemon juice added and the whole allowed to cool. For peas, add a dessertspoon of sugar per litre as well as the salt and lemon.

I use a Fowler's kit as well as metal screw-top jars in good condition. I slowly bring the temperature to 190°F-200°F (about 100°C) over one and a half hours and then keep it there for a good hour. We have used the vegies after they had been stored for two years and they were excellent.

I left the snow and sugarsnap peas whole and they looked great in the jars. So does the asparagus and okra, but you can cut them into bite-size pieces. Please follow the instructions for the acid solution to the letter. Don't cut corners. If you don't have enough salt or lemon juice, put off your bottling until you do!

Thanks for a wonderful magazine and all the great ideas and letters. Still dreaming about having my own piece of land – one day.

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CREATIVE FENG SHUI

PRACTICAL PROBLEM SOLVING

by Salli Ramsden, Inala, Qld.

In my previous article (GR129) I spoke about an intentional, intuitive design system that relates quality of life to environment. Looking back thousands of years we followed the journey of Feng Shui from its Eastern origins into modern practice. Nowadays it brings harmony, health and better fortune to people the world over.

GR readers are seeing the unlimited potential of Feng Shui for the alternative lifestyle. Using it we can create properties which both look and feel good, and nourish us on every level.

LANDING A GOOD ONE

Folk often ask what to look for when property hunting. Engage all six senses! Here is a quick checklist. Seek and find.

- Peaceful history; happy, healthy, long-term residents; a cooperative community.
- Home site protected by higher features behind and beside, with an open front.
- Regular squarish block shape, rising gently from the road towards the rear.
- Elevated, neither top nor bottom, exposed nor stagnant.
- Lush vegetation, good water and good drainage.
- Avoid extremes, striking features, straight lines on site or nearby.

OVERCOMING COMMON PROBLEMS

Are You Getting Enough?

The amount and quality of the essential life force you are harvesting for your family's benefit depends on the qualities of your neighbourhood, your property, the site you choose and your design. The first in this series of articles took us on an imaginary journey with the breath of life (*ch'i*) as it meandered through your neighbourhood landscape, found your driveway and front door and flowed around in your home.

Is your home inhaling plenty of good *ch'i*, short of breath or all choked up? Claim your share through a tasteful entry (mouth of *ch'i*), clear a curved passage to your door and lift *ch'i* quality along the way.



Think of your front door as the mouth of your home and the windows its eyes. This 'up' house counteracts below-the-road doldrums.

Using Features

Most properties are far from perfect. The good news is that Feng Shui solutions for all kinds of problems are everywhere around you and are often the very things that you would like in your property design anyway.

Consciously place gently curving garden beds and water features, plants and trees, shelterbelts, your animals and features that encourage wild animals to visit. Treat your senses to cures like colours and shapes, artwork, symbols, sound, movement, light and reflection. Because each situation is a unique combination of natural, built and human elements the best solutions will vary from place to place and person to person. Let your intuition be your guide.

Rip Into It

Any earthworks alter the way *ch'i* flows through your site. Tune in to the existing flow and ask for permission of the earth before you start. Think each step through carefully before the machinery arrives. Work along contours, adding only curving features.

Minimise disturbance, especially

where you are to build. If an earth-vein is severed, the bulldozer will leave long-term ill-health in its wake. To be really sure, consult a geomancer or dowser before you act. They will help you find the best home site and identify any invisible problems lurking on your property.

Contrary Cures

Last time we looked at balancing harsh features with their opposite. The example used there was the heavy, down, solid, oppressive feel of a cutting or embankment. It was reversed with bamboo which is light, up-reaching and hollow. Plant a hedge or put pots of bamboo at the bottom of the incline.

Gravity Sucks

Tania developed a property nestled in the arms of coastal hills. It had the ideal Feng Shui armchair landscape (like a permaculture suntrap). It was steep though and *ch'i* quickly drained away. She successfully slowed down and trapped *ch'i* (with water) by putting in level ponds, garden beds, planted swales, rocks, and terraces along her land's contours.

Short Back And Sides

If your land slopes down at the back or side, it is probably best to build it up with trees, shelterbelts or outbuildings. Rocks hold ch'i too, so try a wall if nothing else. Always cover your back, whether you are at your desk, in bed, on the loo, or at rest. Don't forget the animals. They will produce more if they don't have to watch their backs.

Too Busy!

Is your property close to a busy road, construction site or noisy neighbour? This kind of problem is often loud or sharp, heavy, on and off. We are looking for a cure which is soft, light, quiet and consistent. How about a water feature or rainforest garden complete with misting system? Having water out front is definitely good Feng Shui! Not enough room? Try a light wall, elder hedge, shiny sign or at least a bird bath.

Full-On Traffic

Similar cures could be employed if the road approaches your property head on, or your driveway points at an important feature. The key here is roundness to absorb or dissipate the straight, oncoming, noxious arrows of energy. A long straight path can be balanced with archways.

At the end of Sydney's northern freeway there is an oasis of palms around a beautiful, round-ornamental fountain. It tinkles softly day and night to protect people who would otherwise be living in the fast lane!

Oddball Blocks

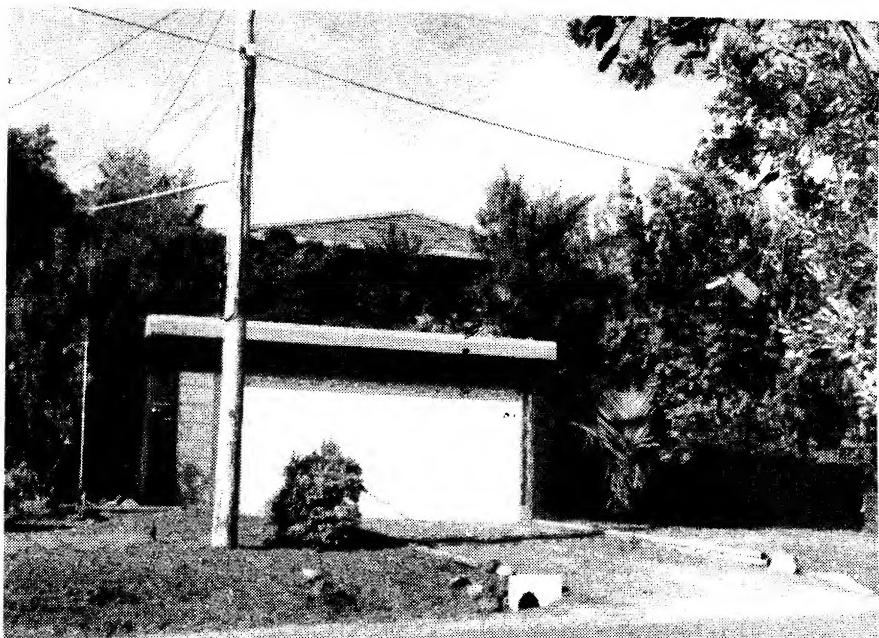
If your block is an odd shape, create a rectangular house paddock within it. Dedicate the remnants to other purposes such as a wildlife refuge or an enterprise with its own separate entrance. This is especially important on a triangular block, or if the property narrows toward the rear. Try filling in any acute corners with trees, or at least rounded features. If it is an L-shape, divide into two distinct rectangles.

Shaping Up For War

Battle-axe blocks are often difficult because the flow up the driveway tends to impact on the blade edge. Try not to put your house there. Instead, a porous picket fence, a row of smooth round rocks or a row of roundish shrubs would help. Shapes like the boot and cleaver are best avoided too.

Symbolic Problems

It is said that stumps around your home signify problems with teeth or bones. Try



Don't you want visitors? Greedy garage door gobbles everything. Pole obstructs tiny invisible entry. A directional sign on the door could lead you left and inside.



Modern design favours garages over living space. Note the arrow shooting into the entry from the straight drive. A well-placed tree or other obstacle will help.

creative uses which encourage life. Dave Clark made his into seats or grew orchids on them. Put a bird bath on top or grow vines over. We all know vines can become a menace. Just in case you need more reasons to weed, if they are choking up trees you may find entanglements in your life, perhaps a legal problem.

Turning It Around

If you feel uncomfortable in your living/workspace, or your life just isn't working, applying Feng Shui can help make things easier. Make small adjustments, one at a time, and watch for improvement. If you are in dire straits, seek help. Moving is a last resort.

If symbols are so powerful, why not recruit some for your team? Know what you want in life. Put symbols of your success where you will see them a lot, and wait for the magic to happen.

Salli Ramsden consults around eastern Australia and the Pacific Ocean. Her healing design collates Feng Shui, geomancy, building biology with healing modalities. A workbook for the *Grass Roots* lifestyle is in progress. If you would like to share your story, air your problems, or enquire about private consultation, please contact her by fax or email. Fax: 07-3372-2289. Email : [salliramsden @hotmail.com](mailto:salliramsden@hotmail.com) Alternatively write to her c/- 30 Gemini St, Inala 4077.

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CONVERTING KIDS TO HOMEMADE BREAD

by Heather Kozak, Dellicknora Vic.

I like nothing better than to sink my teeth into the warm chewy crust of an oaten loaf, dark pumpernickel, tasty rye, linseed with garlic, Dutch-style fruit bread; the variety is endless and the benefits to my health and hedonism immense. Alas, to children reared on commercial sliced white fluff this same gastronomic experience is akin to munching on a mud brick!

Accustomed to the cotton wool texture and flaccid crust, they see the hearty crust encasing real bread as something to be removed and discarded like a banana peel. Chewing is a hard slog for little jaws trained to the gentle mastication required to dissolve 'wonder white'. How do we seduce their taste buds away from the uniform salt and sweet blandness?

Even my daughter Karla, who has been reared from birth on homemade bread, has stated a preference for the insipid bread encountered at our local primary school. She rates it high in the squashiness and foldability stakes. I found her information hard to swallow, especially coming from a girl who gleefully devours the burnt black crusts I occasionally perpetrate. I muddled with recipes and methods until I arrived at a happy compromise: healthy, eco-conscious bread with the appearance and 'mouth feel' that market advertisers spend so much money convincing us we can't live without.

Gradual conversion is the key. Humans are eminently adaptable, while at the same time being resistant to change. For successful conversions, I learnt to sneak up slowly on the victim, starting with the homemade copy of soft, white, sliced. Once they were duped into accepting this facsimile, I could slowly increase the wholemeal and exotic ingredients until they were enjoying, in spite of their original opinion, a wide range of healthy hot breads.

My research brought to light the fact that water makes a hard crust, while milk produces a soft one. Unbleached white flour, while not as high in fibre as

wholemeal, still has its nutrients intact. Slightly underbaking the dough makes it softer and more palatable to young 'uns. Round milk rolls squashed firmly onto the baking tray, brushed with milk and sprinkled liberally with sesame seeds look just like the ones from The-Dreaded-Scottish-Takeaway-Whose-Name-I-Dare-Not-Mention.

The recipe for snow white rolls or loaves that follows can be adapted by replacing several tablespoons at a time of unbleached white flour with wholemeal, or any other sort of flour that appeals to you. Keep increasing the wholemeal content until the recipe is at least 50/50 and add a dash of whole grains and/or

cracked-wheat. Hurl poppy, sesame or sunflower seeds, kibbled rye and millet recklessly over the tops before baking, or better still, recruit children to hurl for you. Their participation in the whole baking process will ensure their enthusiasm for eating the results; a fact of life I learned when having to simulate pleasure while forcing down grey, dubious looking pastry lumps that Karla had vigorously handled.

SOFT 'N' SNEAKY WHITE BREAD

(They won't know it's healthy.)

Makes 2 x 700 g loaves or 12 large round rolls.

5 cups unbleached flour (Ordinary



Karla enjoys a crusty homemade roll, especially when she has been involved with making.

flour is bleached with chemicals which leave residue to extend its shelflife.)

3 tsp dry active yeast (Good dry yeast lets me use hotter water than usual, which speeds the proving stage.)

2 tsp bread improver ('Yeast food': soya flour, lecithin, tartaric acid and vitamin C. If allergic to these, replace with ½ tsp calcium ascorbate powder.)

½ cup powdered milk (skim or full cream)

3 tsp salt (sea salt if possible)

Sift all the above dry ingredients into a large bowl and make a well in the centre. Now mix together:

300 ml hot water

300 ml warm milk

1 tsp cooking oil (cold pressed is best)

1 beaten egg

Pour the liquid into the well in the dry ingredients and stir hard with a wooden spoon, working quickly to avoid loss of heat. Cover dough in the bowl with a clean damp tea towel or an oiled sheet of plastic (recycled shopping bag split down sides?) and leave to prove until risen to nearly twice its original size. When proven, uncover the dough and sprinkle flour liberally over the surface. Punch the air out of it enthusiastically, releasing any inner tensions you may be feeling, and

turn the dough out onto a floured bench.

Knead the dough by folding an outside edge to the centre and pressing it into the dough with the heel of your hand. Turn the dough approximately one quarter and repeat fold-and-press, keeping your hands and dough well floured. Knead until the dough tightens up into a smoothish ball, then form it into the shapes you want.

High Tin Loaf

The above recipe makes two loaves, so cut the ball of dough (or misshapen mass, according to how practised your kneading is!) into four equal pieces. I used to fuss around, weighing the pieces on scales, but I now judge it by eye and hand. Lightly knead each piece into a ball and place two balls in each oiled bread tin. Heavy, old, blackened tins work best, with oil applied with a pastry brush. Squash the balls down with your palm, dredge the tops with flour for a very light crust, or brush with milk and water then sprinkle with sesame seeds, or make shallow diagonal slashes with a sharp knife.

Allow to nearly double in size again, covered as before. Bake in a hot oven for no more than 25 minutes. Tip the loaf out and check its base; if it is pale golden

the bread is ready, if not replace the loaf in the tin and bake for another five minutes. Peek in at your bread after the first ten minutes baking time; cover with foil or lower the oven temperature if the top is overbrowning. Too much heat and baking will harden the crust, which we are trying to avoid in order to tempt those fussy folk.

Burger/Hot Dog Rolls

Cut the dough into 12 roughly equal pieces and lightly knead each into a ball. For round rolls, oil a black baking tray and firmly press six of the balls onto it so they just touch at the edges. Brush them with milk and water and sprinkle with sesame and poppy seeds. Bake in a hot oven for 20-25 minutes, watching carefully for too much browning. Reduce the oven temperature slightly for the last ten minutes. When cooked, slide onto a cooling rack and cover with a tea towel. This helps to produce a soft crust as well.

For long rolls, roll each ball back and forwards on the bench until it forms a sausage shape. Proceed as above.

I hope this starting point recipe will help other readers convert their heathens and make their daily bread a staff of life, not a crutch.

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A HAIRY DILEMMA

by Jane Smith, Kilsyth, Vic.

'After my father died, my mother's hair began to fall out. Within a few weeks, she was totally bald.' So wrote a young woman in a letter to a magazine that I read some quarter-century ago. This came to mind as I read a letter in GR124. In this case it was a teenage boy who was losing his hair. I wondered if there was a connection between the lady in her mid-life who lost her hair and this youngster who was also losing his hair at an alarming rate.

The writer of the letter long ago went on to say how her mother heard words from her doctor that went along the lines of: 'It's a permanent condition and nothing can be done about it. You'll just have to learn to live with it.'

Famous last words, those. But then, so are the words that go, 'Hope springs eternal to the human breast.' And hope leads us on to seek many a cure for an illness or a situation, and to perhaps find a healing that may be totally unexpected by whoever made the diagnosis in the first place.

Her mother, the writer went on, had gone so far as to buy a wig. Then a friend gave her a bottle of zinc tablets that she had bought across the counter at a health food shop. 'Try these,' the friend suggested. 'You might only be lacking in something. It's been a long two years.' Indeed, the mother had been under a great deal of stress over that time, caring for her sick husband and then coping with the trauma of becoming widowed.

At the time of writing, three months further on, the daughter continued, her mother had a crop of soft curly hair growing all over her once bald scalp. She was still taking zinc tablets and having realised how depleted her system had become, she was also taking

multivitamins and mineral supplements. As well, she was eating a lot more fresh fruit and vegetables than in the previous couple of years. Carers quite often neglect their own needs, it has been observed.

It might have been about the same time, some twenty-five years ago, that there was a report on the radio of an unexpected shortage in the Sydney area, of a well known conditioning remedy for dogs. Everybody was buying Bob Martin's Dog Conditioning Tablets, the report went. Even people who didn't own a dog were buying the tablets and conditioning powders.

It all seemed to have begun when a man in his mid-thirties was interviewed on local radio. The man revealed how his health had been poor for quite a while and his hair had gone prematurely grey. Then, because he couldn't afford to buy anything for himself, he began taking some of his dog's conditioning tablets. After a couple of months his hair returned to its normal light brown colour at the roots and his general health improved out of sight.

The radio report led to a further response from the community. A middle-aged listener said she'd been almost crippled by rheumatic pain until she too was recommended the dog conditioning powders by a friend. After just three months, she said, her symptoms were gone.

All very interesting at the time, and of course nowdays it is widely known that the underlying causes of many symptoms of illness, premature ageing, and apparent senility, might well be lack of proper nutrition.

Raw egg plays a part in giving a healthy shine to the coats of dogs and cats and it can do the same for us. Raw

egg is a living collagen and our bodies are literally held together by collagen. The very life force in a raw egg is an added factor.

An egg – preferably one of those golden-yolked smallish eggs that comes from free-range chicken – is broken into a glass and the contents swallowed down quickly, like an oyster. Taken two or three times a week, this is a fine tonic on its own, it was said in ancient remedies. Or, if necessary, the raw egg in the glass can be covered with the juice of a freshly squeezed orange and taken that way.

Another old-fashioned aid to growing lush and shiny hair, not to mention strong fingernails, was to stir a heaped teaspoonful of gelatine powder into a little water once a day and take it before breakfast.

When chicken bones are boiled and strained and the liquid allowed to cool in the fridge for later use as a stock for soup or stew, it will be noticed that the liquid will become a jelly. This jelly too is rich in the substances needed for good hair and nail growth.

As I'm writing about the loss of hair, as well as the nourishment of it, I wonder if I dare mention another anecdote in regard to this? Again, I am back to having read something long ago that struck a chord not to be forgotten:

Early this century, a doctor who travelled a lot in areas of North America where oil fields and wells were situated, noticed that the men who worked at the drill heads and wells were rarely bald. Indeed, these men who so often were drenched in crude black oil as it gushed from the ground, tended to have thick and luxuriant heads of hair.

On the strength of his observations, the doctor bottled crude oil and sold it as a remedy for thinning hair. His advice was to massage the crude black oil into the scalp well, leave it on for an hour and then to shampoo the scalp twice; once to remove the oil and again to ensure that all greasiness was gone.

I'm not sure how often this procedure was to be done and I don't know how crude oil might be obtained. There may be a modern equivalent available? Perhaps some other readers of GR have information on these various approaches to the problem of thinning hair and can put forward more ideas to raise hopes that something can be done to alleviate it.

ELIMINATING HEAD LICE

by Vicki Judd, Boronia, Vic.

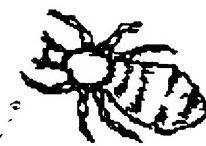
Early in '98, my two older boys, Christopher aged 12½, and Bryan 10, came home infested with head lice and within 48 hours Jim and I had lice and Ben had nits.

I went to the chemist and paid \$11.20 for one of those ghastly, toxic, delousing insecticide preparations, did everyone's hair and instant relief seemed to happen.

The label on the stuff I bought claimed that it would kill all the lice *and* the nits with one application, but, despite having followed the direction to the letter, we were all infested again within 24-36 hours, and the label said we couldn't use the anti-lice solution again for eight to ten days. I, for one, had absolutely no intention of being driven totally insane itching and scratching and allowing those little monsters to breed for that long, so I decided to check through some of my books and other information on more natural and far less toxic ways of getting rid of lice.

I came across a suggestion to massage a few drops of lavender, rosemary, tea tree or eucalyptus essential oils through wet hair at least once a week to get rid of the lice, then once a week to keep them away. I went out straight away and bought a bottle of eucalyptus oil, came home and shampooed everyone's hair with tea tree oil shampoo, then massaged the eucalyptus oil through. I did this twice a week for the boys and three times a week for Jim and I, for the first two to three weeks, by which time we were all louse free. Now we use the eucalyptus oil once a week, which seems to be keeping them at bay.

We also bought several nit combs (95 cents from the chemist), but any fine-tooth comb should do the job. These comb out any lice and nits, but be sure to soak them in hot water with a few drops of the oil you choose to use after each combing.



I hope this helps any other GR readers who are trying to remove chemicals and toxins from their lives.



DID YOU KNOW?

Head lice and body lice can cause skin infections and swollen lymph nodes.

A solution of 1 tbsp vinegar to a cup of hot water, poured over hair and left to soak for half an hour, will kill nits. Comb hair with a fine-toothed comb after treatment.

Nits and lice can be transferred from person to person, or the same person can be re-infected, via hats, clothes, towels, combs, brushes and bedding. Wash bedding and towels every day and dry in the sun until the infestation is over.



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A GRASS ROOTS WEDDING

by Leslie & John Ardon, Lake Boga, Vic.

'What can you say – how do you express 25 years of thanks in one small letter? Thanks for your magazine – it was Leslie's lifeline when she was stuck in the big smoke and to John it was identification of like minds, but the biggest THANKS is for bringing two disabled grey powers together through your contacts column – May '94. Two half-functioning bodies make one whole and together we manage most things and are so totally in tune. So you can see we owe you and your crew gratitude and thanks.' When we received this Feedback letter we were so touched that we had to follow it up and share Leslie and John's joy with GR readers.

Twenty-five years is a long time and has had many and varied influences on us. We have both been GR people since issue one, even though we weren't together then. Thanks to your Contacts column we have found each other and were married in our garden in May last year. We share our home, on a large house block surrounded by lots of trees and a lovely garden, with our two dogs, chooks, ducks and pigeons, all set in the heart of a fruit growing area. As we are both on a disability pension our garden and animals keep us busy, plus the GR lifestyle helps our budget: recycling, home wine making, preserves, bottling, freezing. It will be a sad day when our local tip closes (to happen soon) and we won't be able to recycle timber for our open fire, building materials for our poultry pens, pots for the garden, ad infinitum.

Grass Roots has given us hope (when Leslie was stuck in the city), help, instructions, insight, awareness, and the comfort of knowing we are not rarities and that there are others like us out there.

They say life begins at 40, well for us it's at 50 plus. To find one's soul mate, friend, helper, companion and lover is truly wonderful and it's a big thanks to *Grass Roots*.



People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within.

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

BUILDING A CHEAP SHADEHOUSE

by Graham Murchie, Ballandean, Qld.

I am always inclined towards building structures as cheaply as I can. This inclination is reinforced by necessity most of the time. So when I sat down and had a chat to myself about the need to build a shadehouse the use of shadecloth was not mentioned. I had a gut feeling that it would be horrendously expensive, so of course it was not part of the equation.

Looking around for what was at hand I noticed a thick patch of tea tree saplings and there was the answer. The first job was to put the ironbark poles in as uprights. They were 2.7 metres long, placed 60 centimetres in the ground. I used six, one for each corner and two for the doorway in the middle of one wall. It didn't need to be a large structure so 3 metres long by 2.4 metres wide seemed to be about the right size. Cypress pine was used for the top beams and they had to be lapped on top of the posts as there would be considerable strain on these. The beams were drilled and a 15 centimetre spike hammered through into the post (see illustration). Three more pine logs were used as rafters.

Holes were then drilled through the posts at 30 centimetres, 1 metre and 2 metres in height and 8 gauge soft wire run through them and pulled tight. (That's 4 millimetre wire for those of

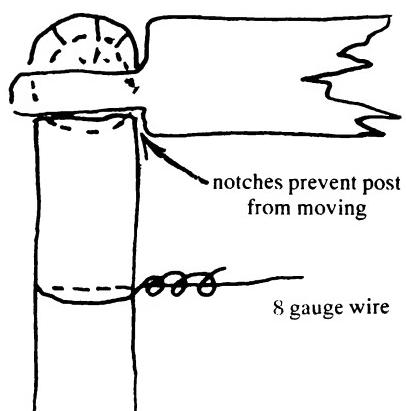
you who have never heard of 8 gauge.) If you are going to use heavy wire like this on small projects, steer clear of the high tensile stuff. It will only result in bruised fingers and blood blisters and will almost certainly drive you to drink.

I must have been feeling particularly lazy that day because I had intended to concrete some rocks as a base to stand the walls on, but ended up just digging some shallow trenches and laying oiled logs in them.

Then came the job of cutting up a heap of tea tree. These were about 2 centimetres to 3 centimetres thick and up to 3 metres long. They were then laced on to the 8 gauge wire one at a time with tie wire. When the walls were complete I trimmed the excess at the top with a chainsaw and laid these offcuts on the rafters, intending to tie some wire netting over them to stop the wind from blowing them off. I never got around to it and although we have had some good storms since then, none have blown away. It must have something to do with the twiggy nature of the tea tree causing it to interlock.

It was necessary to wait a couple of weeks for the leaves to drop off, which created a lovely mulch on the floor. Then I moved a bench inside for seedlings and a propagating box for cuttings. Generally these makeshift

Details of Post & Beam Attachment



jobs are not quite as good as the expensive models, however this system has the advantage that I am able to move the branches around on top according to the season. I stacked more at the western end as the weather got hotter, giving more protection from the afternoon sun.

The whole project cost me nothing except my labour and I am really pleased with the result. There was an added bonus in that I had a few small branches left over which ended up as besoms (as described in GR103).



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NATURAL ICE CREAM

HOMEMADE OF COURSE

by Pamela Odijk, Caboolture, Qld.

Australians love ice cream. We consume 330 million litres of it (and similar products) each year, two-thirds of which is in take-home containers. However, after I also read that some brands of commercial ice cream contain a vanilla flavouring formulated from an ingredient used in lice killers, a binding agent made from diethylene glycol which is also found in anti-freeze and paint strippers, substitute banana and pineapple flavours made from amyl and ethyl acetate (the solvents used in nail polish), and nut flavours simulated by using the same chemical that is a major constituent of rubber cement, I decided that I would always make my own ice cream at home. At least I would know exactly what I was eating!

There are also other benefits – homemade ice cream is cheaper to make, tastier, and it doesn't take as much time as people are led to believe. You don't have to have an electric mixer either but it makes things much easier if you do.

Incidentally, if you thought soft serve ice cream was a better alternative, think again. *Choice* magazine's sampling of this form of ice cream showed a staggering amount of bacteria lurking in this product. More than half the samples tested had unacceptably high levels – 49 of the 86 samples tested – and some were particularly dangerous for pregnant women as miscarriages can be caused by eating such food. Young children and the elderly are also at risk. One sample tested contained a type of staphylococcal bacteria which can give you food poisoning. However, there is not much you can do about soft serve ice cream except not buy it.

And if you thought 'low fat' and 'reduced fat' ice creams are better for you, wrong again. These were not all they were dressed up to be either.

Here are some of my easy natural ice cream recipes. The first basic recipe can be made into many different flavours. This basic recipe when finished fills a large mixer bowl, so I keep a spare bowl just for ice cream making and put it in the freezer when I have finished mixing it. (You can often find old mixer bowls

in second-hand shops.)

RECIPES

First, make the ice cream base.

Ice Cream Base

4 tbsp flour
1 cup sugar
5 tbsp powdered milk (full cream or reduced)
3 cups water
4 eggs (separated)

Combine all ingredients with the egg yolks only in a single saucepan. Mix well with a wooden spoon. Place the single saucepan inside another larger saucepan in which water has been placed so as to reach almost to the base of the top saucepan – or use a double boiler if you have one. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly with the wooden spoon until the custard base mixture thickens and coats the spoon (approximately 15 minutes). Remove from the heat and allow to cool completely.

Now use this base to make the following.

Plain Ice Cream

600 ml thickened cream
the 4 egg whites whipped with ½ tsp salt
1 tsp vanilla
the cooled ice cream base

Whip the cream and when this is thick add the cooled custard base mixture and vanilla and mix thoroughly, then fold in the whipped egg whites.

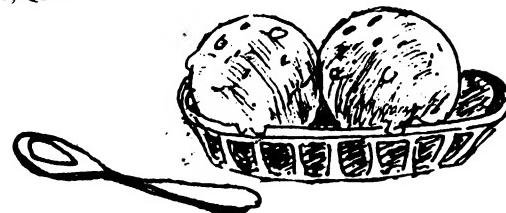
Freeze. After about 1 hour, whip the ice cream again. Refreeze.

Chocolate Ice Cream

Add 6 tablespoons drinking chocolate to the cooled custard before adding to the whipped cream. Omit the vanilla if you wish.

Chocolate Rum and Raisin Ice Cream

Add 6 tablespoons drinking chocolate to the cooled custard and add ½ teaspoon of rum essence instead of the vanilla. After the second whipping, sprinkle a handful of raisins on the top of the ice cream before replacing the bowl in the freezer. Do not stir the raisins through as they will inevitably all sink to the bottom. Or,



stir the raisins through when the ice cream has begun to thicken and freeze.

Coconut Ice Ice Cream

Add half a packet of raspberry or strawberry dessert mix and 2 tablespoons of coconut milk powder to the cold custard base before adding it to the cream. Omit the vanilla. However, be warned, some brands of instant dessert make the ice cream too thick.

Caramel Ice Cream

Add half a packet of caramel instant dessert mix to the cold custard base before adding it to the cream. Omit the vanilla.

Coffee Ice Cream

Add 2 tablespoons of powdered coffee or 2 tablespoons coffee essence to the custard base before adding it to the cream. Omit the vanilla. But be warned – some inexpensive brands of coffee may be decaffeinated with the same solvent which is used in do-it-yourself products such as paint removers, synthetic turpentine, degreasers and stain removers!

Fruit Salad Ice Cream

1 can evaporated milk chilled for several hours (overnight)
¼ cup sugar
1 dsp gelatine dissolved in a little water and allowed to cool slightly
2 mashed bananas
juice of an orange
pulp of 2-3 passionfruit
Or add 1 cup of pureed fruit of your choice, such as, peaches, plums, nectarines, apricots, instead of the bananas, orange juice and passionfruit.

Whip the chilled evaporated milk until thick and creamy. Gradually add the sugar and beat until it is dissolved then add the gelatine mixture. Lower the mixer speed and add the fruit. Mix well.

Freeze for about an hour, then whip again and refreeze.

PRACTICAL FARM TROUGHS

by John Tucker, Capel, WA.

Early in '98 while I was busy making some small troughs for chooks to drink from and for pigs to have a mineral lick out of, I thought this could make another good article for my favourite magazine. These small troughs are suitable for water or dry ingredients

TYRE TROUGH

The first trough is made out of an old car tyre. Place the tyre on its side and cut the top out of it with a sharp knife and a hammer, hitting the knife around the tyre with the hammer until the cuts join up. Keep the cut about 20 millimetres in from the outside of the tyre, as this leaves a rim on top of the tyres so, when used for young pigs, dry feed does not spill so easily.

The tyre is then placed on a level surface, which is first covered with paper, and cement is put in until it is 30 millimetres above the bottom rim of the tyre. This should be trowelled off and allowed to dry.

Whenever using moulds for cementing, paint the surface to come into contact with the cement with old oil first as then the mould can be removed easily.

DRUM TROUGH

Cut a 100 millimetre strip out of a 200 litre drum. Hammer and grind the edges smooth so that no one's blood is lost during the making of this trough. This is a mould for the second trough, so put a vertical cut in the rim to enable it to be removed from the cement when set.

The mould is then tied together with

two pieces of string and then almost filled to the top with cement. The next step is to push a small plough into the wet cement until the cement comes to the top of the mould. This should then be weighted to keep the disc in the right position in the mould.

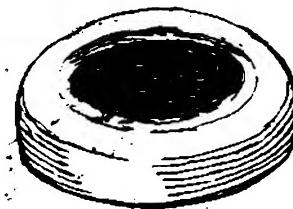
When the cement is set, the string is cut and the disc and the outer mould can be removed, leaving a nice easily cleaned water trough for very young poultry.

BIN TROUGH

This trough needs one large plastic rubbish bin and a 10 litre bucket, three-quarters filled with sand. Cut the bottom out of the rubbish bin, leaving a 25 millimetre strip of the bottom still attached to the wall of the bin. Then cut the wall of the bin 30 centimetres up the bin; this, turned upside down, is the mould for the trough. Once again, put down some paper to stop the cement from sticking to the base on which you put the mould.

Fill the mould about three quarters full of cement and weight the mould down as it tends to lift up when the cement goes in. Then push the bucket of sand into the mould and that will bring the cement up to the top, making sure it is central in the mould. Leave to set then remove bucket and outer mould.

The top part of the same rubbish bin can also be used as a mould by cutting the wall of the bin 30 centimetres down from the top of the bin and turning it upside down on a paper covered surface, filling three-quarters full of cement and pushing in a sand-filled small plastic



Re-use an old car tyre as a mould for a small feed trough.

dish. The dish will have to have its weight adjusted to make it stay in the right position in the outer mould. The mould will also have to be weighted down as the cement tends to lift it off the base.

I hope these small troughs will be as handy to someone out there as they have been for me.

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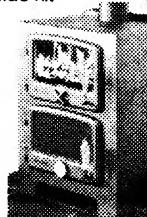
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The Oldest Gardener Of Them All

by Allan Windust, Mandurang, Vic.

When I started my new vegetable garden five years ago the soil was just ten centimetres deep. It is now thirty centimetres deep. My secret? I engaged the services of the oldest gardener of them all. It has outlasted the dinosaur and began gardening 650 million years ago. It is the secret of our productive vegie plot at Nardoo Waters near Bendigo. Humanity's best friend - the earthworm. And the earthworm can work for you.

The earthworm is the most efficient tiller of the soil there is. In the modern era it was Charles Darwin who first calculated that earthworms brought up to 15 tonnes of subsurface soil to the surface in one hectare of English soil in one year. Since that time scientists have found that on the Nile Delta earthworms bring up an amazing 60 tonnes to the hectare annually. No farm

machine can compete with that.

The converse of the marvels that earthworms perform is the fact that soils without earthworms are unhealthy soils. The burning of crop residues, use of chemical fertilisers, over-tilling and stock compaction are all the enemies of the earthworm. The message for gardeners is to look after the earthworm and it will look after your garden.

UNDERSTANDING EARTHWORMS

At Nardoo Waters our first gardening priority is to understand and manage the earthworm. Remember we are discussing the earthworm, not the compost worm found in worm compost systems. Compost worms can be purchased from worm farmers, but earthworms cannot because only scientists can breed them in captivity. Fortunately, you already have the basis of an earthworm popula-

tion in your garden. Their cocoons are in most soils just waiting for the right conditions to emerge.

The earthworm eats its way through the soil, swallowing soil and dead organic matter as it goes. The compost worm eats mainly nutrient rich organic matter but seldom penetrates the soil.

When the earthworm burrows its way through the soil it changes the soil structure. You can tell the difference. You will find puddles persisting on soil without earthworms after rain, whereas earthworm-healthy soil soon soaks up excess moisture. The reason is the complex system of burrows the earthworm leaves behind as it eats its way through the soil. Also, when the earthworm eats particles of soil it 'glues' them together with organic compounds from its digestive system, leaving micropores in the soil. Combined with the earthworm



Allan Windust raking earthworm-nourished soil in a vegie garden bed.

burrows these micropores allow the soil to soak up and hold more moisture, like a huge sponge. But that's not all.

Soil Bio-Chemist

The 'glue' that binds the digested and excreted soil particles is rich in organic matter. This organic matter is a combination of digested plant and animal material and millions of microbes. Microbes are the secret of the worm's power. The resultant bonding material is very stable and resists weathering and all else but severe chemical fertilisers such as urea. But the plants can access this fine organic material called 'colloidal humus'. Now we enter the plant's biosphere called the rhizo-

sphere, meaning the territory around the roots.

In The Root Zone

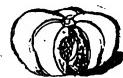
The rhizosphere or root zone is where the plant gets its nutrition with the aid of earthworms and their helpers. The plant knows what nutrition it needs. It sends signals to its roots which exude enzymes to unlock the rich colloidal humus to feed the plant. This feeding is at the initiative of the plant, unlike when plants are force fed by chemical fertilisers which promote excessive growth prone to insect attack and plant diseases.

Next time you pull out a weed or root vegetable you will almost cer-

tainly find their handmaidens, the earthworms, clinging to the roots. And now you know that, unlike harsh chemical fertilisers, earthworms are gentle on plants and produce healthy growth.

The next article will tell you what and how to feed your earthworms so that they can feed your plants to make healthy fruit and vegies, as well as how to make your soil deeper.

PUMPKIN POWER



In China the pumpkin is referred to as the 'emperor of the garden' and has become a symbol for fruitfulness.



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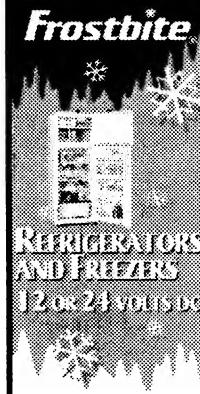
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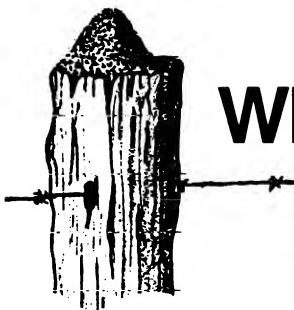
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NATURE'S WEATHER FORECASTERS

by Glenda John, Rainbow Beach, Qld.

From the time people first walked the earth possibly no subject has been discussed more often than the weather. If you think about it, you will agree that after a normal greeting of 'g'day' or 'good morning', and then inquiring after one's health, the next comment will invariably be: 'Nice (or awful) day, isn't it?' As much as we would like to choose the type of weather for any particular day, there is not a thing we can do to change it.

For thousands of years people have tried to predict the weather; in times past knowing just how the weather would behave was an essential factor in existence. Before any decision was made to plough the fields, plant, harvest or sail the seven seas, knowledge of what the weather would be like in both the short and long term was very important. Personal observation of the sun; moon; stars; wind; cloud formations; animal, bird and insect behaviour; and plant and tree growth were relied upon to predict weather changes.

Modern meteorological technology and advanced communications have now made the need for personal observations unnecessary – or have they? Information is gleaned daily from every corner of the globe; satellites beam down information and pictures from space, but still the predictions given are not always accurate. Maybe the creatures we consider less intelligent than ourselves have a greater knowledge of the world around us than we give them credit for.

We have barely scratched the surface in studying the habits and behaviour of our 'lesser' creatures. In most cases, no research has yet been done in this field to find out how, or why, animal and plant life show odd or unusual behaviour prior to weather changes. Scientists are divided in their acceptance of this behaviour. Some believe it to be just coincidental, while others fully accept that it does happen but can give no explanation.

The only research that has been done, to my knowledge, was on hummingbirds in North America. Scientists there discov-

ered that these particular birds, and it looks like it could apply to all birds, have a special organ in their ears which acts as a type of barometer enabling them to monitor changes in atmospheric pressure. As their migratory flights depend on favourable winds, it is vital that they choose just the right time to leave. The birds are also able to pick up infrasound and it is thought that birds flying hundreds of kilometres inland are able to hear the noise of the ocean and distant thunderstorm activity. But sadly, this is as far as the research has gone at present.

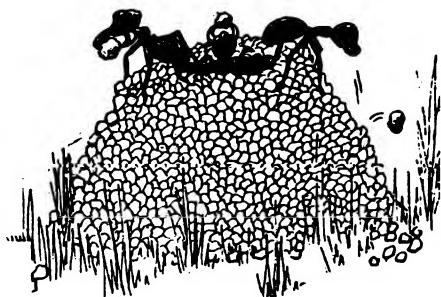
My own research on the subject indicates that the behaviour patterns of animals, birds and insects are affected by changes in atmospheric pressure and humidity, as well as by sunspots and solar flares. H Walker, Long Range Weather Forecaster, Crohamhurst Observatory Qld, confirms that sunspot activity affects certain birds. He has noted that within 24 to 48 hours of sunspot activity, black cockatoos are agitated and on the move. This occurs every time so cannot be considered coincidental.

PLANT FORECASTERS

Plants also behave in ways we don't yet fully understand. Why do some trees (especially in arid regions), during a prolonged dry period, suddenly burst into new growth? This occurs well before there is any noticeable change in atmospheric readings to suggest good rain is on the way. Why do other plants, for instance some of the *Murraya* species (mock orange), come into bloom prior to rain? This can happen at any time of the year and is particularly noticeable during long dry spells. These plants do not seem to have any set time for flowering, as do other species, but certainly seem able to produce blooms prior to good falls of rain.

INSECT FORECASTERS

Insects, especially ants and flies, have been observed as the best harbingers of weather changes. The most reliable



indications of wet weather are when ants are seen cleaning out their nests, building cones around their holes in the ground, or building on top of fence posts and old stumps. Bush and house flies continually landing on an exposed body and acting in a lethargic or 'sticky' fashion is also claimed to be quite a reliable indication of approaching rain.

ANIMAL FORECASTERS

Black Snakes

Also known as the red bellied black snake and common black snake, these snakes prefer to live close to waterholes, dams, creeks and rivers, but can at times be found further away. If they are found kilometres from water and in areas where they are not normally seen, then it is quite possible flood rain is on the way. On several occasions prior to massive flood waters inundating land along the Murray River, black snakes were seen a long way from the river and in upland areas.

An increase in snakes in general may indicate wet weather. It is thought the snakes are increasing their food intake before heavy rain lessens their own activity and makes food harder to find.

Crocodiles

In some areas of northern Australia, crocodile nests have been found on higher ground than normal prior to an extremely good wet season.

Snails

Many people, in all Australian states, maintain that rain is not far off when snails begin creeping up the walls of buildings and fences. This movement is not restricted to nighttime but is seen during the day as well.

Cockatoos

Black cockatoos in particular are good

harbingers of rain. If the cockatoos come in towards the coast from the ranges, rain can be guaranteed within a few days. One explanation for this movement is that the rise in humidity opens the seed capsules of the trees in which they feed and makes the seed easier to get at and also opens the bark on certain trees, enabling easier access to grubs. This explanation came from a Forestry Department staff member in Western Australia who had observed the black cockatoos' movements over a number of years.

Worms

Here is another observation from north Queensland. On several occasions, prior to torrential flood rains, worms have been seen coming out of the ground and

crawling up over brickwork and stones as if to get to higher ground. The ensuing rains were indeed torrential and caused widespread flooding.

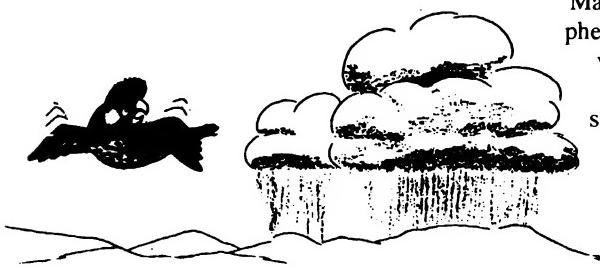
MISCELLANEOUS PHENOMENA

Watching the sky is an important element in being able to predict the weather. The colour of the sky in the early morning and late evening, the shape of clouds, the clarity of stars, halos around the moon or sun are all indicative of changes in the weather.

In addition of course, there are those arthritic or rheumatic folk, or those who have had broken bones, or suffer with corns who will always be able to tell you when rain is imminent. Why is this so?

Maybe variations in atmospheric pressure or humidity – who knows?

And what about TV screens that glow in the dark, condensation on hub caps of vehicles, static on transistor radios? Are these also signs of rain?



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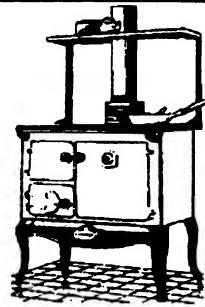
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THE GOOD OIL

by Gerard Kelly, Arana Hills, Qld.

Our pottery oil crock developed a leak; we knew because an oily dusty sludge was always appearing on the varnished stand on which it stood. No matter how many times this polished block was wiped, independently by both of us, thinking it was the result of a dribble, it would soon return.

Finally, I took the matter in hand and poured the oil, carbon bits and all, into a saucepan then thoroughly cleaned the pot, the strainer and lid. When it was free from any oil, I examined it but could find no cracks or holes. Should we throw it out? No, it was too attractive.

The pot was glazed inside and out, except for the bottom. So if the oil was seeping through, then it must be coming through the unglazed section – a minute hole perhaps? After thinking about it for a while, I decided to smear the bottom with candle wax. This produced a white lumpy mess and I was not sure that the hole was sealed as it could not be seen. What I needed to do, was to melt this wax so that it would flow into the unseen crack or hole.

I realised that pottery can stand a fair bit of heat and I needed a flame to melt the wax. The only thing that I had was a hand-held gas bottle with a flame nozzle. This did the job perfectly! By making quick passes over the wax, it soon melted and, as the pot was upside down, it flowed into the crack. Just for good measure I repeated the process of waxing, then wiped the bottom over with a paper towel. Then I filled the crock with water, leaving it on the hob of the sink. After a few hours there was no dribble of water under it, so I knew it was sealed. Six months later the pot had still not seeped any oil.

The other thing I noticed about the oil pot was that although it has a strainer, the oil which was transferred to the saucepan was blackish brown and the residue that I washed out of the pot was a greyish sludge impregnated with many fine bits of carbon. I thought there must be a way to filter all this muck and carbon out.

The first idea was a funnel filled with paper towel, but the weight of oil pushed the towel into the neck and it soon clogged up. It was also taking forever to drain down and I didn't want to spend all day topping it up. By that time, I was using two, two-litre milk bottles, one to hold the dirty oil and the other to

collect the filtered oil from the funnel above it.

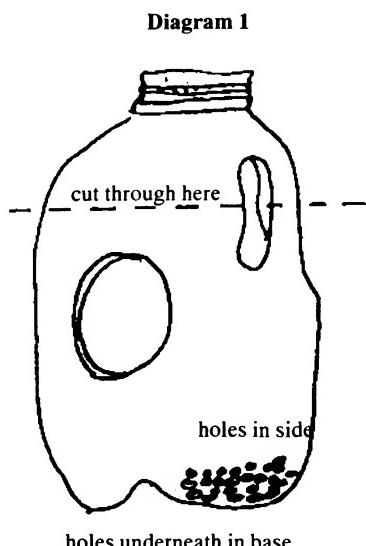
I tried cotton wool in the funnel but the result was similar to before. It took ages to drip through and the cotton wool ended up jammed in the neck of the funnel. After a few other experiments, I finally came up with a satisfactory method of filtration.

OIL STRAINER

Take a two-litre plastic milk bottle. With a skewer poke numerous holes across one side near the bottom. Come up about 25 millimetres with these holes. In the bottom, at right angles to this first lot of holes, poke numerous other holes so that you have holes across the width of the base about 25 millimetres across the width of the side and about 25 millimetres high. Then cut through the bottle, halfway up the handle, and truncate the top right off. Try a bread knife for this (see diagram 1).

You can now put your hand in the bottle. Fold some cotton wool into a pad which is to go on the inside over the holes. Wet the cotton wool with some oil and place it down in the corner where the holes are. Now place the milk bottle in the mouth of the oil crock, in such a way that the corner with the holes is the lowest point (see diagram 2). Pour all the dirty oil into the milk bottle and it will drain through in half an hour, leaving clean, clear oil.

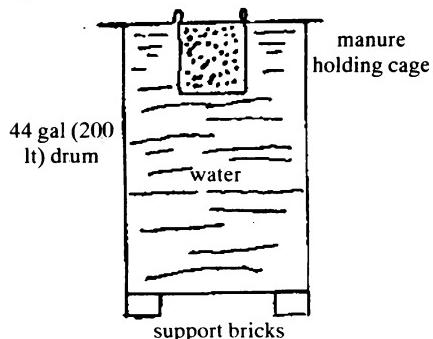
The cotton wool will still retain some oil when the process is finished, so wrap it in two paper towels and gently squeeze it. Some more cleaned oil will ooze through the fingers. We have been doing this for some months now and have only clean oil in our crock and the smell of fish, which must be fish oil, seems to be left in the cotton wool.



LIQUID MANURE

by Kel Connell, East Gosford, NSW.

Animal manures are valuable fertilisers and much sought after by organic gardeners, however, some people prefer to use them in liquid form to give plants a quick boost. I recall seeing a sketch once of a liquid manure container. It was a 44 gallon (200 lt) drum with a manure holding cage made from galvanised mosquito wire inside it, supported from the top.



This system was designed for cow manure, because cow manure is full of grass seeds. If the cow manure is immersed for two to three weeks the seeds rot and will not germinate. The nutrients from the manure seep into the water and enrich it.

The manure holding cage can be removed and the liquid bucketed out. It was recommended that the one load of manure could be used twice (that is for two drums of liquid) then placed on the garden – the manure residue, as well as the liquid. Liquid manure penetrates the soil and gets down to the roots better, without weed seeds.

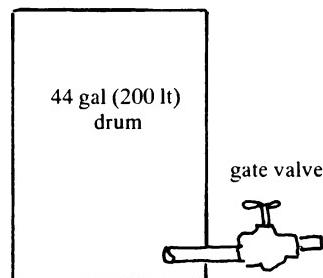
Horse manure also holds many seeds, and can be liquified. Chicken manure has no seeds thanks to the chicken's digestive system. It is very strong and tends to burn young roots.

The holes in the holding cage should be very small (such as mosquito wire) to hold the manure but allow the water to permeate through manure.

If the manure is just tossed into the water it settles at the bottom of the drum and is not subject to circulation of water. Also, I suspect decomposition is aided by supporting it near the water's surface where it can benefit from solar warming. This is why stagnant pools of water always smell. Oxygen is quickly used up by the muck in the bottom of the water as it decomposes, then bacterial action causes gases to develop. The

decomposition is slower in the cooler water which also has less oxygen.

Chooks that free range are sometimes subject to worms (snails are a source of worm infestations in chooks.) I doubt that battery hens are treated chemically for worms, but they may be treated for diseases, so it would be worth checking. Horse stable manure could be full of worm control chemicals which can kill earthworms, in turn affecting decomposition of vegetable matter into plant food. The sketch I recall seeing had a five centimetre diameter gate valve at the bottom of the drum for convenience, to save bucketing water out from the top. If you are mass producing, this may save you labour time.



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MOUNT PERRY

by Estelle Ethell, Mt Perry, Qld.

Nestled in a valley amid the foothills of the Great Divide, some 100 kilometres west of Bundaberg, lies the quaint little country town of Mount Perry. The area was first discovered in 1848, then in 1862 with the finding of copper it blossomed. My mother was born here on the day the famous Bert Hinkler landed his Baby Avro in what is now our school grounds, and as a child visiting my grandparents, I used to dream of one day retiring here myself. That dream has become reality. Mount Perry offers the traveller the opportunity to view mining relics from our past, the old Smelter site, the cemetery, our museum with pottery and blacksmith areas, and our lovely old churches and halls, some of which are listed with the National Trust.

From the ranges you can take in the simply breathtaking views. Our rolling hills aren't always green, but graziers manage to eke out a living, and they're home to a variety of wildlife.

There's a well appointed park and picnic area, plus picturesque creeks and the Wolca Reserve, home to our famous Mount Perry mountain bike race. Walking tracks wind up the mountain itself.

We also have a community complex, caravan park, hotel/motel, police station, hospital, mail agency, two general stores, and fuel and rural supplies. It's a relaxed and peaceful 'must-see' spot for any traveller, and I'm proud to be a 'Mount Perryite'.

CAMPBELLTOWN

by Sue Kozianski, Campbelltown, NSW.

I must be frank and say that it was largely economic reasons that led to our original decision to live here. We have lived in this area for over 10 years now and not even winning the lottery would induce me to leave. We are just a short way to beautiful scenic drives, half an hour from the beach or Southern Highlands, a couple of hours from Canberra or the Blue Mountains or the Central



Estelle Ethell's special area, Mt Perry, 100 kilometres west of Bundaberg.

Coast, one hour by train to Sydney CBD, or closer to Parramatta. This means that we have the convenience of being central to all the places we like to go and Campbelltown itself is a great place to live.

Our children attend top academic public schools. Our high schoolers attend a top agricultural high school, so they will have access to valuable experiences I never had, and meet kids from rural families. We are close enough to several universities should any of us decide that is what we want to do. Ten minutes away is Mount Annan Botanic Garden, the native plant garden of the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney. All this and I haven't even mentioned the employment opportunities Sydney offers, or the cosmopolitan culture. I have enough room to keep chickens (without breaking local regulations) and to grow much of our own fruit and vegies. We are close to transport, so the kids can become independent easily as they get older. All around Campbelltown we have absolutely superb views. My favourites are from the top of the hills at

Mt Annan looking over Camden and Wollondilly. There are magnificent peaceful spots by the Georges River where the hills rise sharply, covered in natural vegetation that reflects like a mirror in the water. You can watch the mist rise off the water early in the morning, and listen to the lyrebird call in winter. We have abundant birdlife and frogs and lizards too.

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WHAT'S ON

There are lots of events coming up of interest to GR people. Why not venture out and enjoy the fine weather at a festival or market, or broaden your knowledge of the ovine family at one of the sheep related events.

DON'T BE SHEEPISH

Coloured Sheep World Congress

The fifth World Congress on Coloured Sheep and Their Products will be held at Deakin University in Geelong (Vic) from 6th to 12th of July '99. Breeders will be interested in the papers, workshops, demonstrations and day tours while spinners and craftspeople will also find much to enjoy in demonstrations, displays, workshops and fleece quality competitions. Ring 03-5983-1397 for information.

The Melbourne Sheep & Wool Show

One of the largest turnouts of sheep breeds in Australia – your perfect opportunity to compare breeds and familiarise yourself with some of the more unusual varieties. A huge display of wool crafts, fashion parades and related industries will interest all members of the family. Held at the Royal Melbourne Showgrounds, 16th to 19th of July. For enquiries phone 03-9281-7444.

Mountain Spin Along

The Handweavers and Spinners Guild of Victoria Inc is holding a Spin-Along-at-Harrietville weekend on 26 - 27th of March. Weaving, stitching, felting, dyeing and sharing knowledge will be the order of this fun, hands-on residential weekend. It is *not* necessary to be a guild member to participate. For enquiries phone 03-9329-6191.

MARKETS, FAIRS, FESTIVALS

Grow Organic '99

The East Gippsland Organic Agriculture Association Inc is hosting this event on the 13th and 14th of March at Camp Coolamatong on the Banksia Peninsula, near Bairnsdale (Vic). Enjoy delicious organic food; participate in workshops; expand your mind with speakers on organic conversion, soil life, plant disease and nutrition, biodynamic asparagus growing, ecologically sound farming methods, health and nutrition from organic food. \$30 for the weekend, \$16 per day. Ring 03-5157-1586 for more information.

Landfest '99

March is Landcare month and Creswick Landcare Centre's Landfest is the major event. All age groups will find something to enjoy in the environmental displays, demonstrations, live music, dance, environmental theatre groups, roving performers, Great Landcare Trail Race, nestbox building, animal nursery, home-cooked produce and local wines. To be held on Sunday March 21st. Phone 03-5345-2200 for more details.

Moriac Harvest Festival

The giant pumpkin weigh-in is a feature of this festival to be held on Sunday March 28th at the Moriac School (Melways ref 511, D). Other competitions include vegie creatures, pumpkin scones and scarecrows. Exhibits include bee keeping, alternative energy, heritage seeds, saddlery and much more. Enjoy delicious country cuisine. Children's rides for all ages. Call Margaret Lewis on 03-5788-7203 for details.

New Crossing Place Market

For everything grown, picked, potted, sewn, hammered, painted, hewn, gathered, cooked, by hand, at home, with love. Held in the Lion's Park, off Emily St, Seymour (Vic), 9am - 1pm, Saturday Feb 27th, May 29th, August 28th and November 27th. For more details phone 03-5793-8322.

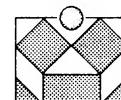
The Stroud Show

An alternative farming expo will be held for the first time in conjunction with the traditional Stroud Show on the 9th and 10th of April. Historic Stroud is in the Karuah River Valley close to the Barrington Tops (NSW). Phone organiser, Libbie Tindall, for details on 02-4994-5086.

Dolls House and Miniatures

The tenth anniversary Sydney Dolls House and Miniatures Fair will be held on May 15th - 16th at the Bankstown Town Hall corner Chapel Road and Rickard Street. For the young and the young at heart. For information phone 02-9745-1603.

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KANGAROO ISLAND BOUND

GESTATION OF A DREAM

by Brian & Diane, NSW.

I really do not remember when the idea of dropping out first took root, most likely when we were living in Singapore during 1993. There life is driven by the accumulation of things, always bigger and better things, to the point where it becomes overpowering! We decided this style of life was not for us, not if we were to stay sane!

On our return to Australia we were fortunate enough to be invited to spend Christmas with our good friends Cherry and Mike on Kangaroo Island (that's the big island off South Australia). As we have always enjoyed camping we jumped at the offer. Cherry and Mike own 250 acres at the eastern end of the island which is about half heritage mallee and the rest cleared, however, the added bonus is their own beach!

After four weeks exploring the place, we decided that this could be the place for us, so we started to look for land and explore the options to maintain a lifestyle there. Unfortunately, at the time we could not find anything that we liked and/or that suited our very tight budget. So we pushed the idea into the back of our minds and got on with life as usual.

By the middle of 1996 Brian was getting very depressed with work and not enjoying the idea of another 17 years doing the same old things (sound familiar, commonly known as the mid-life crisis!), so we talked things over and came up with a plan: let's run away to Europe with our life savings and stay until it runs out!

We did it. We spent time in the UK, lived in France decorating a villa for free rent, and then we moved to Tuscany in Italy and spent nearly three months with Diane's brother. While there we helped renovate a villa, bottled wine and, best of all, worked in the olive groves of the Tucson mountains. During this wonderful time, back came the idea of self-sufficiency. Why couldn't we do it? Our children were grown up, only fear stood in the way.

So on our return, we asked Cherry and Mike if we could stay at their place

in Penneshaw on KI and look one last time for that dream land. Well, we went down and the very first piece of land we viewed was it! Arable land, 32 acres with 14 acres cleared, the rest beautiful bush full of wildflowers. In front a lagoon on which myriad birds congregate, black swans by the dozen, and overhead the most beautiful sight of all, wedge-tail eagles soaring up into a clear blue sky. This just had to be our future home, by hook or by crook!

So then the fun started. How to make this thing happen? How would we survive where there was no running water, no power, no sewerage system, and no immediately visible means of support?

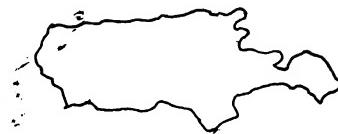
The obvious first step, money! We are both believers in fate, if it's meant to be things will fall into place. So on the market went our home of the last 12 years (which previously we hadn't had any luck selling), and lo and behold it sold, and at a good price! First step taken and the first bridge up in flames.

The land purchase then entered the red tape stage and at time of writing is still tied up, but hopefully will soon be completed. Next problem, somewhere to live for approximately 12 months while plans are made.

We decided on the central coast as we had always lived inland. The second house we viewed was ideal, brand new, reasonable rent and near the beach. Fate taking a hand again. In the meantime, Brian had found a job, not always easy when approaching the big 50! Was all this meant to happen or what?

The next exciting step was to design our new home, which will be of the kit built variety. This will include two rooms for bed and breakfast and an area for our daughter Lara and her daughter Jade, who visited KI with us, fell in love with the place and have purchased a small block of land of their own!

She will live with us until her plans can be actioned. We are busy researching, growing vegetables, herbs, olive trees, vines and anything else that



will help us become self-sufficient once we move to the island. There is potential for us to get work in the tourist industry, which is very active and growing quite rapidly (average of 2000 tourists a day).

We never imagined that there was so much to be done. Each day we think of new problems, which often seem insurmountable at the beginning of the day, but by the evening, after a bit of thought and a lot of discussion, not so big after all. The trick really is to try and make each stage fun and not really a problem at all.

We have traded in our new family sedan for a second-hand four-wheel drive, which will be more suited for the mainly dirt roads and useful for jobs about the place, and hopefully also for picking up paying guests off the ferry! Just doing this simple thing seemed to bring the dream closer.

We are carefully storing our copies of *Grass Roots*, with relevant sections highlighted for future reference. The advice on chickens and vegetable growing are of particular interest. I must admit some of the tales of savage cockerels have put me off, so maybe only hens for us! Reading the stories of other people's adventures in moving onto the land have been both an inspiration and a delight.

Next time, an update on our progress.

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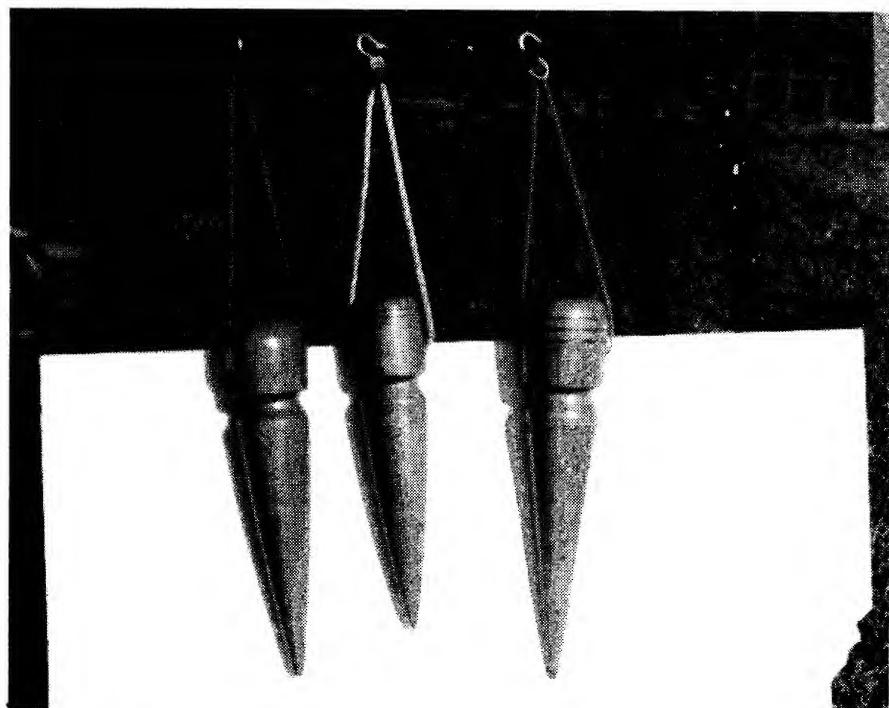
A USEFUL PLANTING AID

by Alan Stewart, Alexandra Hills, Qld.

Early last year whilst out walking the dog, I came across a short length of hardwood dumped in nearby bushland. It was about 1.5 m long and tapered. I couldn't think of a use for it at the time and left it in the timber rack and forgot all about it. Then recently, when checking a word in the dictionary I came across the word 'dibber', a pointed implement for making holes for seeds or plants. I believe they used to be fairly common, but are rarely seen nowadays.

However, I then remembered the length of hardwood in the rack. The three dibbers are the result. They are easy to use and will make handy gifts for gardening friends.

A wood lathe is needed to turn the dibbers. Those who do have one will find the dibbers a very easy project. The cost per item was about 20 cents. A coat of Estapol varnish and a short length of plastic rope for the wrist was all that was required.



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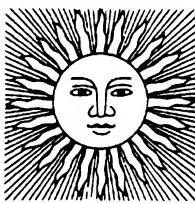
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TAN YOUR HIDE

UTILISING SHEEP OR GOAT SKINS

by Vivienne Manouge, Angaston, SA.

Making leather is easy and well worth the effort if you have a supply of skins. My method has evolved by trial and error, plus a little serendipity in the form of a backyard flood that soaked a bag of salted skins I had, which I then neglected for several weeks, and so learned by accident how to dehair a skin without chemicals.

REQUISITES

Equipment

Equipment is minimal. You need an old rolled-up rug, or a thick log or barrel, or a large, smooth, convex stone with a carpet or similar padding; one reasonably airtight plastic bag (if you want the hair off) big enough to hold your skin or skins; a non-metallic (eg plastic) bucket without a lid, with a capacity of 20-25 litres (takes one or two skins at a time, depending on size or thickness of fleece); a 1 kilogram milk tin or similar for boiling the bark; an expanse of wood or wire-netting; a fence or wall, for example, bigger than the skin, to which it can be nailed or hooked; and a packet of nails or wool bale fasteners for wire netting.

Ingredients

the skin
common salt
tree bark
water
oil or fat

Mallee bark gives me a beautiful tan, at no cost to the tree. I've no doubt that other

eucalyptus would do as well and it's worth experimenting with other species. For the oil, I've used everything from suet and neatsfoot oil to rancid butter and cheap cooking oil, all successfully. Again, it's a matter of exploring the possibilities.

If you want to tan the skin with the fleece or hair on, you should do it while it is still fresh. The tan liquor darkens the fleece. In this case, start at 'fleshing' (below) and follow through to 'breaking'.

THE PROCESS

Dehairing

Wet the hair side thoroughly with the hose, making sure it is wet through. Spread a one millimetre layer of salt over the flesh side, fold the edges in and roll up the skin. Seal it into a plastic bag. Every four to six weeks rinse it out, resalt it, and roll it up again. After about six months the hair will begin to come away from the skin. At this stage, pull off as much as you can, rinse, resalt and reroll. Do this once a week, keeping the skin very damp throughout the procedure until all the hair is gone.

Fleshing

There are special fleshing knives available from leathercraft suppliers, but a piece of a blunt coarsish saw blade works just as well. Use it patiently and gently. The idea is to score through the fat and flesh to the actual skin without tearing the skin, to allow the tan to penetrate. You need a firm convex

surface, preferably padded, over which you can spread the skin, flesh-side up.

Work systematically over it with the blade, using a combing down-stroke over the entire surface. You don't have to get every particle of fat and flesh off – just make sure it is thoroughly scored without damage to the skin itself. Don't let it dry out at this stage. Hose or sponge it down if it starts to feel dry.

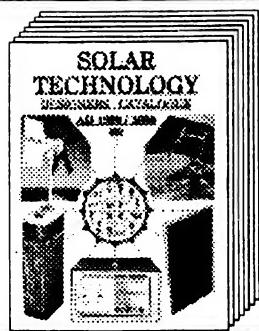
Tanning

In an old saucepan or milk tin, boil as much bark as you can fit in as much water as it takes to cover it, until it is very dark – about ten minutes is usually enough, unless your bark is old and leached. Into the nonmetal container put enough water to comfortably cover the submerged skin (but don't put it in yet) and add the strained bark brew. Stir well. It should be the colour of weak tea, or a little darker.

If your skin still has its fleece or hair on, wet it through before you enter it, otherwise, just damp is fine. Slide it into the tan brew over the edge of the container, flesh-side up, to expel air from the fleece or hair, and avoid trapping bubbles in the folds of the skin. Twice a day for three days lift, turn and re-enter the skin. This ensures an even tan.

After three days, the skin will be showing some colour, and the water will be almost clear. Prepare another, stronger brew, boiling fifteen minutes instead of ten, and use this to replace the old brew.

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Keep turning the skin, replacing the brew every three days or so with a stronger one, until the skin is tanned through, with no pale spots or streaks on either side. Nine days is usually enough for sheep or goat skins, but there's no harm in leaving it twelve. Mallee bark gives a very dark tan.

Stretching

The easiest way is to nail it to a wooden wall or picket fence. Alternatively, you can make holes with a nail about two to three centimetres in from the edge and ten to fifteen centimetres apart all round the skin and hook it with wool bale fasteners to a well-tensioned wire netting fence. Of course, you could make a frame from whatever you prefer.

Stretch it flesh-side up, not too tightly – it shrinks as it dries, and thins down considerably too. While it's still wet, rub oil or warmed fat, or a mixture of both, into the whole flesh-side surface. Leave it to dry for about a week (less if it's in hot sun), then take it down.

Breaking

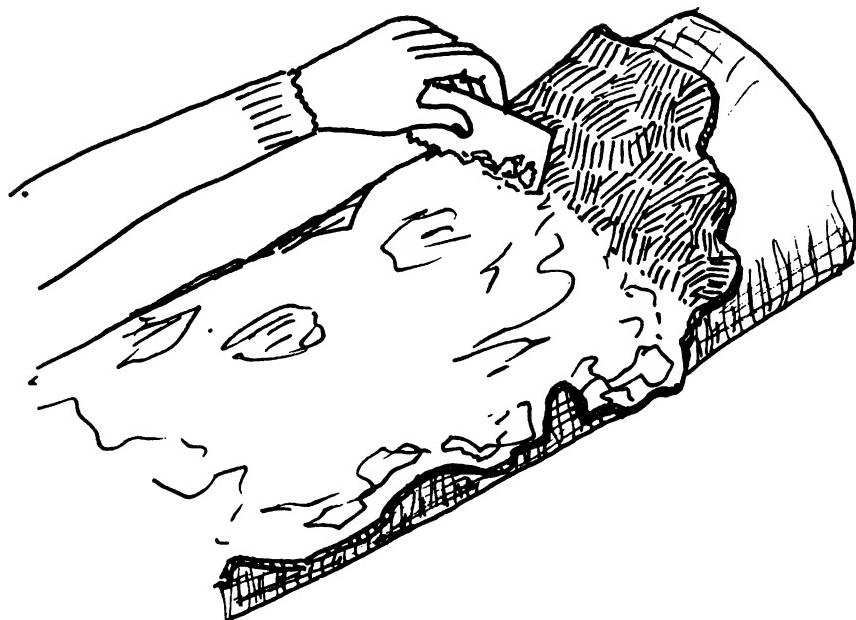
With a blunt knife, scrape over the flesh side to remove excess grease and bring it up to a suede-like finish. If it's very greasy or smells of goat, swab it down both sides with petrol. Now, working on a firm surface, fold one edge of the skin over and work the fold across the leather with your hands. Work from top to bottom, then from side to side, across both diagonals, flesh-side up and flesh-side down, applying firm pressure right along the fold as it progresses across the skin, with the heels of your hands. For small, light skins of sheep and goats I've found this easier than stropping the skin around a square post, which is the more usual method for larger skins. It works very well and the leather continues to break down to its final softness and suppleness, as it matures into its full beauty while you wear or use it.

END PRODUCT

The end product is like morocco leather, soft and pliable enough for sleeveless vests and jerkins, but I've made quite successful shoe soles out of it by gluing six layers together with a commercial glue. For the uppers it is best doubled. It's good for handbags, purses and wallets, sandals and belts. With goat hair left on it makes excellent moccasins. Fleecy sheep skins make very good ug-boots, though for outdoors the soles need reinforcing. To sew, cut your thread two to three millimetres



Feeding the fleshed skin into the tan brew, flesh-side up.



Fleshing on padded convex surface with a blunt piece of an old saw blade.

wide along the length of the skin, if possible, close to the edge. Taper one end sharply – this end serves as a needle. Make holes with a nail, a half to one centimetre apart, about three centimetres in from the edge, matching the holes in the pieces to be stitched. Soak the threads for a few minutes before use, leaving the tapered end out of the water to keep it stiff.

You can use a leather polish to preserve this leather, but oil or stale butter can be used instead with good results, and if you look after it, it lasts and wears well. I'm still exploring the potential of this method and one or two others, and there's still plenty for an independent thinker to discover about the craft. Good luck and happy tanning.

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What's done to children, they do to society –
Karl Menniger

NEARLY NATURAL

Gardening My Way

by Gwen Deem, Yerra, Qld.

I thought organic growing was pretty easy from what I'd read about it. It seemed all you had to do to produce juicy, chemical-free, healthy food was to whir up a bit of garlic or a few squashed bugs in the blender, spray it on the plants and all problems are solved. Unfortunately, I soon learned otherwise.

Never having been the slightest bit interested in gardening until we bought our farm, I avidly read every organic article I could lay my hands on. Mind you, I'm not saying garlic sprays and the likes don't work, but I think one has to be a bit more observant and apply oneself to the task of checking and spraying with far more regularity than I did. However, because I have tried most of the tips I've read (and there are literally thousands) I feel I can now speak with some experience and tell of the successful and the more frequent not-so-successful trials I've encountered.

I'm not a truly organic gardener, although initially I did set out to grow all our produce as naturally as I could using the bountiful products that Mother Nature sends our way. Nowadays, however, if we haven't been burning bonfires to provide the wood ash that I like to mix in with my compost and blood and bone side dressings, I'm not averse to using a little sulphate of potash in the mix.

Anyone contemplating starting a worm farm might like to use my easy method of constructing the 'farm' from six (or as many as you like depending on the size you want) bales of hay. I just put the bales on their side in a rectangle on the dirt underneath our huge old mango tree. I put cow or chook manure on top and then I add all our kitchen scraps and torn up newspapers to it, and every so often when it looks as if they need it I shovel in a bit more manure down the centre. Make sure to keep the 'farm' damp. Don't worry about your worms escaping, if they're fed enough they'll stay put and your rectangle of hay will soon be full of lovely crumbly, incredibly fertile castings which your garden will love. Alternatively, you can



From being the world's worst gardener to almost self-sufficiency in fruit and vegies is quite an achievement.

make a tea of the mixture, dilute it and spray it over the plants as well.

I used to use an NPK fertilizer on our lemon trees, but after we suffered quite a severe case of *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (root rot), which I've treated fairly successfully with copper applications, I decided to change to fowl manure to fertilise, as I'm told by the supplier it is a

complete fertiliser. He also tells me three kilos or a large spadeful around each tree three times a year is the amount to use. As I've only just begun using this it's a little too early to report yet, but the trees are looking healthier and colouring up well after a bad case of the 'winter yellows'.

One thing I do use a lot of is liquid

manure. Cow manure, chicken manure and comfrey tea are all used quite liberally. The one thing I never seem to be able to get enough of is wood ash. I've found this to be particularly good for deterring white cabbage butterfly, as well as being a useful addition to the compost bin, around the roses and pawpaws etc. Speaking of pawpaws, mine used to be rather tasteless until I read in a really old gardening book that sprinkling coarse salt around the dripline really improves the flavour, and it does.

Although potatoes grow fairly well here in southern Queensland I'd never managed to get really good crops until I was told to take off the top growth to make them 'set' better. Don't remove all the leaves, just snip off the top ones. That works too.

A companion planting guide I've read said not to grow any form of chives or onions near beans. So, now I know why my beans that were bordered by spring onions failed to produce.

I've yet to find an effective organic control against fruit fly, but I'm told if you paint old buckets with sump oil and put them upside down on posts around

the trees you'll catch far more fruit flies than the fly traps do. Whilst I'm on this subject, I'd really like to experiment with the old-fashioned type of hanging fly strips so if anyone out there has a recipe on how to make them I'd really appreciate it. What I have found to be a good deterrent to other tree insects is rags which I dip in creosote, fix on a piece of wire and hang in the trees.

When I first began gardening I couldn't work out why our nasturtiums grew into huge leafy bushes with no flowers and our fig trees produced no fruit. Cutting back on the nitrogen seemed to fix this. Too much nitrogen is sometimes responsible for puffy skin on citrus.

Another plant I love to grow is comfrey. It has so many uses: aids the rapid breakdown of compost, as a mineral tea around plants, for wrapping a sprained or bruised limb to really help the recovery process. Except one lady who did this developed a nasty rash, so it may not be so helpful for sensitive skin.

I'm still not sold on the idea of mulching in the lemon and olive orchards. Originally I mulched everything, but

found that although the mulch played a part in retaining moisture and keeping weeds down it also harboured ants, which encouraged aphids, thus creating sooty mould. This year I don't intend to use it in the orchards and I'll see what effect that has on the various problems, but I'll still keep mulching the vegie garden.

When I first started growing peas I used twigs to support them, but soon found the plants broke the twigs and I ended up with a tangled mass of pea plants, which all but obliterated the lettuce growing next to them. Now instead, I bend fencing wire into large hoops for the peas to climb up. It's cheap, easy to handle and easy to store.

I think it's quite an achievement to go from the world's worst gardener to almost self-sufficiency in the fruit and vegetable sector and it's been a really interesting learning curve, although I'm sure that I still have a long way to go before I'm truly proficient. But, last week my mother-in-law introduced me as her 'daughter-in-law with the green thumb'. What a warm glow that gave me.

A comprehensive article on organic fruit fly control is in GR112.

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CATALOGUE ON REQUEST

Livestock Health and Management

Information You Need but Haven't Known Where to Ask

If you have queries on any type of livestock send them in and we'll get our panel of experts to research the problem for you. Send them to Livestock Advice Page, Grass Roots, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

KOOKABURRA ATTACKS SCREEN DOOR

My son and his wife live in a lovely home in the Perth suburb of The Vines, lots of bushland, kangaroos and varied birdlife. It is this latter which is causing them some concern. A particular kookaburra has been attacking their screen door for six months or more. This happens with such ferocity that the bird leaves blood, apparently from its beak, all over the glass, the doorstep and surrounding area. We know it may have something to do with the bird's reflection in the glass, the mating season etc, but why then does it concentrate only on the section of glass covered by flywire screen? There's a very large area of uncovered glass to the right and left. Do you or any of your readers know a way of putting a stop to this in such a way as to leave both home owner and kookaburra with some shreds of dignity?

R J Rourke,
FINLEY 2713.

We don't have any answers - can readers help?

ORGANIC POULTRY FEED

I would really like some information on feeding chickens organically, so as to have organic chickens and organic eggs.

Margaret Micos,
SOUTH COOGEE 2034.

Before the advent of commercially pelleted feed, poultry were given mixed grains and cooked household scraps to which a little bran and pollard were added. Most backyard and farm flocks prospered on these rations so there is no reason why you should not adopt them today. If you cannot purchase ready-mixed, organic poultry grain, put your own diet together comprising three parts wheat, two parts barley or cracked maize (or a mix of both) and one part rolled steamed oats. The nutritional value is increased if the whole grains are sprouted overnight. If you only have a handful of birds, consider recycling kitchen scraps several nights a week, briefly cooking vegie peelings and stalks to soften the cellulose. Soft scraps like bread can be added when mixture cools. Extra carbohydrate (pollard or millmix or millruns) can be added to the cooled mixture in the winter months. If you have difficulty in obtaining organic grains, ask at nearby produce stores if they know of

local producers, or contact the National Association for Sustainable Agriculture Aust Ltd, PO Box 768, Stirling 5152, for contacts.

STICKFAST FLEAS ON POULTRY

Could you please tell me anything you know about Stickfast fleas on chooks etc. What is their lifecycle? What is the best way to rid the chooks of them? I have been using a malathion-based wash that I use for the dogs. It gets rid of them for the time being but a couple of months later they are back. If there is no rain I hose the yard well.

E A Both,
INNOT HOT SPRINGS 4872.

Stickfast fleas are difficult to eradicate – just when you think you have them controlled they turn up again. There are two distinct steps to their management: treatment of infected birds and regular cleaning and disposal of shed litter. Speed is the essence to control, once they appear on the birds, usually as small dark spots on comb and wattles, treat before the next stage of the lifecycle begins. The dark spots are feeding female fleas that are about to burrow into the flesh to lay eggs. Ulcers form where the burrowing has occurred and the eggs laid in these hatch into larvae. These in turn fall off onto the ground and pupate, burrowing into the soil or litter during this process. These emerge as fleas, the four-week cycle commencing with the adults mating and hopping actively like household or dog fleas. Treatment takes the form of smearing the adhering fleas with lard, or a similar sticky material. Vaseline with flowers of sulphur or derris dust mixed in has been recommended by GR readers, as has cooking oil to which a drop or two of eucalyptus or tea tree oil has been added. Apply 2 - 4 times daily if possible. The second step of the control process – removal of litter and droppings – should be undertaken weekly if the fleas are bad, then monthly until winter. Stickfast fleas tend to proliferate during the warm part of the year. All material from the hen house, and the topsoil in adjoining yards if necessary, should be composted. Do not leave around where poultry may have access because this flea can survive for up to three months in litter or soil. If possible, cement the floor of the hen house to facilitate easier cleaning. Do not overlook the fact that these fleas can also infest bare areas on cats and dogs. Malathion is not a suitable treatment to use on layers if eggs are being collected for human consumption.

LIFTING A COW

Brenda Bu was enquiring about lifting a cow. Some years ago we had a Charolais bull and our cows were having calving problems, so Larry built the Upsi Daisy, which was an immediate success. We did not need to roll the cow over or try to get our arm under her (a cow is like an enormous bag of water and one gets one's arm under at one's peril as they can roll over onto you) or, if rolling a cow over, their bowel and/or intestines can twist. Have you seen a cow roll in a paddock the way a horse does? The only cow with four legs in the air is a dead cow.

The frame the cow is lifted on is a rigid chair-like tubular steel triangle, fitting around the udder at the heavy end of the cow. The long strap puller slides under her to pull the straps through under her chest. We find cows are happy to be in the Upsi Daisy as they become very confident and attempt to walk along and graze in it, as they know they won't fall and have straps cutting into them and chafing them. The only strap is one around the brisket and clipped above her shoulders, supporting her chest.

We won the Farm Safe award for the benefits to the farmer's back, as the device is easy to put on and there is no heavy hauling and lifting. They are lifted twice daily.

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Penny Osterhaus,
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ECO NEWS

FAR FROM SNOWY WATERS

The recently released report on the state of the Snowy River, the Snowy Water Inquiry report, has elicited a far from enthusiastic response from concerned environment groups. In stating a preferred option of restoring the flow of the Snowy to 15 percent of its original flow, the report falls far short of the 28 percent of original flow previously recommended by three expert scientific panels.

The figure of 28 percent was given as the minimum threshold needed to viably restore the river and reverse the degradation described thus by David Bellamy: 'Practically dead . . . a series of stagnant, methane-producing ponds.'

CLEANER ORCHARDS

Orchardists in the Adelaide Hills using integrated pest management (IPM) techniques, rather than broadscale pesticide applications, are reported as being pleased with the high quality of their fruit as well as the cleaner working and living environment. There are also more small insect-eating birds in their orchards and increasing numbers of frogs and worms as pleasing evidence of the environmental benefits of IPM.

IPM is a multifactorial approach to reducing pest damage in crops to tolerable levels. It might include use of natural predators and parasites, genetically resistant crops, environmental management and appropriate restricted use of chemicals where necessary.

RE-USABOWL

The NSW government commitment to reduce waste to landfill by 60 percent by the year 2000 is being put into practice in northern NSW. Not by some highly advanced technological development such as waste incineration, but by washing dishes.

Disposable food and drink containers, generate tonnes of waste at North Coast markets and festivals every year. Re-usabowl, the first ever Australian mobile dish-washing facility, will introduce a system of re-usable crockery at markets and public events, thereby reducing mountains of waste. The custom-built trailer is fitted with large water tanks, three sinks, hot water systems, and storage for 3000 items of crockery.

Re-usabowl has the potential to reduce waste at public events by at least two-thirds, as well as employing three people.

Re-usabowl will service The Channon market near Lismore and other large markets on the north coast, including Byron Bay and Bangalow.

For more information contact: Russell Anderson or Saskia Kouwenberg on 02-6689-1658 (ph/fax).



KOALA CONSERVATION

NSW conservationists are concerned that koalas are facing extinction in the south-east forests. This genetically unique population has suffered a catastrophic decline as a result of a series of impacts, the last of which has been woodchipping. There are only two known remnant groups left in the region. Both of these face the threat of further clearfelling of their habitat.

A scientific assessment undertaken by the Commonwealth Government concluded that the area required to sustain a viable koala population in the region is a minimum of 52 hectares of suitable habitat. The regional forest assessment showed that suitable koala habitat is patchily distributed in the coastal and hinterland forests in the region.

Conservationists have therefore proposed a special koala protection regime in production forests. In their negotiations with government and industry, conservation groups compromised by proposing that only half the area shown to be important for koalas be reserved, provided that unreserved habitat was protected from clearfelling. This will allow the protection of areas sustaining known breeding groups. Areas outside reserves will be managed with strict guidelines under joint community control.

Because of the plight of the koalas in NSW, the state government has initiated a statewide Koala Recovery Programme. The recovery of the population in south-eastern NSW will be seen as a litmus test of how serious the government is in this endeavour.

WHALE OF A PROBLEM

A Dutch researcher has found that the toxic chemicals polybrominated biphenyls (PBBs) and polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDs), used in millions of computers and televisions, are accumulating in the tissues of sperm whales feeding in deep North Atlantic waters. These chemicals can damage an organism's nervous and reproductive systems. They were excluded from a ban on certain chemical pollutants agreed by European and North American countries in mid '98 because there was no evidence that they spread beyond national boundaries.

However, Jacob De Boer of the Dutch Institute for Fisheries Research in IJmuiden has uncovered proof that PBBs and PBDs have reached even the deep ocean and accumulated in animals at the top of the marine food chain. He found the chemicals in the blubber of sperm whales that were stranded on the Dutch coast early in '98. Sperm whales feed on fish and squid in deep water in the middle of the ocean, but never in shallow water. The stranded whales' stomachs were empty, indicating that their PBBs came from the deep mid-Atlantic and thus that they are in the global food chain. De Boer has also found the chemicals in seabirds.

PCBs are among the persistent organic pollutants (POPs) that European and North American countries have agreed to ban. They are also among the 12 POPs proposed for a worldwide ban at talks held by the UN Environment Programme in Montreal in mid '98. Despite their toxicity and persistence, PBBs and PBDs are on neither list.

From Debora MacKenzie, 'This Week', *New Scientist*, 4 July '98. Reprinted from *Bogong*, Vol 19, number 3, 1998.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR Readers,

In Willunga, SA, some 40 kilometres south of Adelaide you can discover many paths to meeting the challenges of today and the rapidly approaching new millennium. **THE WILLUNGA BASIN** is a rural area in easy reach of a major city. The attractions are undeniable – there are beaches within 10 kilometres, mixed farming including orchards and vineyards, historically significant settlements, new and established housing clusters, space and civilisation in a Mediterranean climate, and a Waldorf school!

The first ever Waldorf school opened in 1919 in Stuttgart, Germany in response to community pressure for a school offering educational opportunities that cut across class, monetary and gender barriers. Over 800 schools worldwide now base their efforts on the work of Rudolf Steiner, the Austrian philosopher. Although loosely affiliated, each school responds independently to the needs and purposes of its community. The Willunga Waldorf School gained registration in 1991 as a kindergarten and primary school. Currently 130 children are enrolled from K-7. Willunga Waldorf School responds to the challenge of developing free human beings, personally empowered to impart purpose and direction in their own lives. Curriculum is based on our human developmental needs and not on economic or political programmes. Open days and school tours are a great way to get a feel for a school projecting optimism for each child's future. An extensive information kit is also a stimulating read.

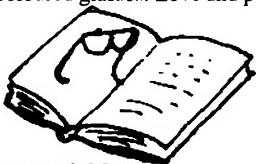
**Tony French-Kennedy,
PO Box 730, WILLUNGA 5172
Ph: 08-8556-2655.**

Hello Megg, David and GRs,

I bought **LAND IN THE MALLEE** four years ago, consisting of mallee trees and limestone; no fences, power or water, no dwellings. Shifted when there was a drought, had to search for feed for the four large animals I have – two camels, two horses. I walked them in the long paddock (along the main roads), carted water in 44 gallon drums. Collected water by hanging a tarp in the mallee trees. Tried constructing a boundary fence and almost gave myself a heart attack, I got so mad, couldn't sink a post or dropper in the limestone, the crowbar would just bounce back at me. Last winter I concreted out the shed, got sick and tired of mice fighting under the galvanised iron and brown snakes passing through under my feet, never knew when I would be treading on one. Last winter was the warmest winter I have spent, built a fireplace with steel plate on top to boil the water and cook my food. The wind still goes through, but it is better than the year before when I had no shed. I can lie in bed now and say to myself thank God I don't have to build it again. Drilling steel by hand in the hot sun is something that should be left to the mad ones, and boy I must be one of those. All the mixing of the concrete was done by hand. Stones were gathered and cracked by hand, the area is 50 ft x 30 ft. It is surprising what one little person can do, when her mind is set.

If there is anyone out there that has vegetable seeds to spare I would love some, I'm prepared to pay the postage. My whole purpose of being here was to have a place the animals and I could rest when not travelling, so far the travelling hasn't got off the ground. Would love to hear from camel/horse-minded persons, interested in walking the long paddock and a simple life. At the moment I don't feel as if I have much purpose or am going anywhere. I read the bible and know that none of us are going to be here much longer, but don't seem to see life through rose coloured glasses. Love and peace to all.

**Julie Miller,
RSD 44, ANGASTON 5353.**



Dear Megg & Mary,

Perhaps my previous letter was a little too controversial. **TRAVELLING** is fun, but there are many people who are capable of destroying it. Thieves are everywhere and more frequently strike when one is asleep. On a coach trip to the Northern Territory my money was stolen while I slept. My tip to others is not to have valuables in your handbag,

or take it in turns to sleep if travelling with a partner. I've woken many times to witness someone going through my things while staying at youth hostels and backpackers, so I make it a general rule not to carry valuables with me when sleeping communally. Camping or festivals are great, but I've woken to discover torches shone in my face, zipper or tent open and someone 'feeling around'. There is much sexual abuse of female travellers, so people beware! Now, I place a lock on the zipper and pin it down inside, as a precaution against further abuse.

**M Levakis,
PO Box 95, NORTH CARLTON 3054.**

Dear GR Readers,

Every day for the last six years I have suffered from severe **CHRONIC URTICARIA** (hives). I have tried numerous treatments and diets and undergone extensive allergy testing. I cannot gain any relief unless I take cortisone. I have been on this medication for over five years and I am very worried about the long-term side effects. Can anyone suggest an alternative to cortisone? Also, is there anyone else who has suffered from this dreadful complaint? My condition followed a physical breakdown which left me bedridden for many months and with CFS for years. It has been six long hard years and I'm slowly recovering but the cause/s of my urticaria seems impossible to overcome. Any suggestions would be greatly appreciated.

**Rosemary Lyons,
PO Box 402, BEECHWORTH 3747.**

Dear Grass Roots,

I have been reading your publication for many years now and am a frustrated bushie. Not being in a position to flee to the scrub, I do what I can to live naturally, living mostly out of my garden and using my brains and ideas gained from association with your contributors so as to try and emulate the ideals I cannot, fully, physically satisfy.

In the process I make my own flour (and bread), using a **HAND-OPERATED FLOUR MILL** which I have motorised. Right now I am building a hand-operated machine which will power all my machinery as well as the mill, but to complete this I need another hand-operated flour mill and am finding it difficult to procure one. This one I have, I bought from an ad I found in your mag years ago, but have not seen one in there lately.

If you are able to tell me where I can get one I would be very grateful, or perhaps one of your readers knows of one which I could buy, new or second-hand would be quite OK.

I also want two bevel gears with which to construct another hand-operated machine suitable for people living in isolated conditions. They need to be from four to six inches in diameter, so if anyone knows of such, I would love to hear about them.

Love your mag and deeply envy all who live the style I don't, but do want to.

**Lloyd Perkins,
5 Beecroft St, HUSKISSON 2540.
Sounds like you're doing pretty well where you are Lloyd.**



Dear Grass Roots,

Help!! We have recently purchased 160 acres of timbered pastoral land and are looking at moving there in six months time. There is a small cabin with no electricity or running water. We would love to hear from readers who have moved to acreage and **STARTED FROM SCRATCH**; where they started, how they went about water and electricity and planning of the land. We would also like to hear from people who did it with children (we have 4 aged 6, 2, 1 and 0), and how they coped with the change of environment and trying to establish a part self-sufficient property with the demands of children. Hope to hear from you all soon. Keep up the great work, we truly enjoy your magazine and only wish it came out more often or was twice the size.

**Dallas and Mellita Reinke,
MS 264 Childers Rd, BUNDABERG 4670.**

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear Grass Roots,

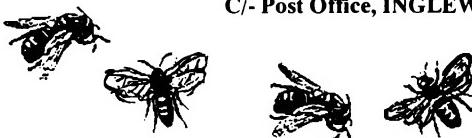
Perhaps some readers could help with two problems of our bush block.

BULL ANTS! How to discourage them from living near us as one of us is allergic to them and has been warned that just one more bite and he could die. He carries antihistamine tablets with him in case, but it's still pretty scary.

BEES! Last summer we had swarms of them around our dwelling and everyone who lived there or visited was stung at some stage. Hives have been placed in the bush round about over which we have no control. Any suggestions? We don't want to keep people away because of them.

We love our bush home - 46 acres of 'adventure' land. Fairly steep, covered in eucalypts and ironbarks and have cleared just enough for safety in this fire danger area. We love reading GR and have collected a lot of useful advice and projects for future years.

Joyce McCrohan,
C/- Post Office, INGLEWOOD 3517.



Dear Grass Roots,

Over the last twelve months now, my fiance and I have searched deeply into purchasing a **4-5 BEDROOM HOME**, sited on 10 or more acres, to no avail! Regardless of having excellent rental references, banks will not deal with us, nor does anyone seem to want to settle on vendor or rent/buy purchase. Cold hard cash only is what sellers want! We are prepared for a lot of hard labour in achieving our ultimate goal in life; to escape this crime/smog ridden society of high stress and high costs of living to match.

I almost cry when parting with the \$180 per week rent money. We'd much rather see this sum spent wisely. All we need is the opportunity to start afresh. Does anyone selling have anything to offer us?

Mandy Spacek,
8 Berith St, UMINA BEACH 2257.

Dear GR Staff and Readers,

I wonder if any reader can help me with a problem. The bowl of my **BREVILLE KITCHEN WIZZ** has a crack in it and I can't find a replacement. The model is FP1, which is stamped underneath the machine. I use it every day almost and I can prepare vegetable soup for a quick lunch anytime. Making coleslaw is a dream. If you have one, and your machine is not working, can you let me have it please for the price and postage you require? I would be most grateful.

Now, will one and all accept my apology for not answering your letters regarding my newest book on craft. Because there are well over a hundred from every state in Australia, I just cannot answer them all, as I have a scar on the retina of my left eye and I can only write for a while before it starts to hurt. I am very distressed over it and doctors say there is nothing they can do. Anyhow, I really do appreciate all the kind things you have written to me about my craft book. I feel very humble, but overwhelmed at your response. For Mrs Grimes of Victor Harbour my craft book is \$19.50 posted and it is entitled *Crafts Old and New - Recycled*. Before my eye got too bad I used up a stack of material scraps and made six patchwork eiderdowns, four for great grandchildren, two patchwork aprons, two casserole holders (for taking food to CWA etc), four cushions and a rug. I'm so glad to rid the drawers of the pieces and more than pleased with the Christmas gifts I've created.

Marjorie Bligh,
163 Madden St, DEVONPORT 7310.

Hi GR Folk,

I wonder if there are any GR people in **PORT MACQUARIE** or surrounding area who would like to write to me. My family and I are planning the move up there June/July 1999. And I would like to find

out as much as I can about the area and get to know a few people before we do. I was born in Forster but left when I was seven (a few years ago!), so in many ways it will be like going home. We have had many holidays there over the years and I believe it to be a good settling-down choice for us. I'm not a city person and try as I might I can't seem to get the hang of it. So it's back to my grassroots.

Also, in about 1990 numerous wonderful GR people wrote to me with information on **HOME SCHOOLING**. At that time I was living in Mt Pleasant. One woman who wrote was living in Mt Isa with nine children, aged at that time, from 18 years down to 9 months. If you are still out there, would you please write to me. I would love to hear from you again.

Last but never least, Diane. In 1985 on the 15th January I met a wonderful woman called Diane. We were in King George V Hospital at Camperdown. She had just given birth to a son (her seventh child) and I had just given birth to my daughter (my third child, at the time). She lived with a really nice younger man who worked for Telecom and they lived in the Leichhardt/Petersham area. We talked almost all the time we were there. Diane, are you reading this, if so write!! I would love to re-unite. I have thought of you often and always believed you to be such good inspiration for me.

Katharine Adams,
10/49 Rodley Ave, PENRITH 2750.

Dear Grass Roots,

I would like to invite fellow Brisbanites to come along and join us at **BEELARONG CITY FARM** in Morningside. We have been established for just over twelve months now and are looking for more willing participants to expand the gardens and establish a food forest. We meet as a group each Sunday at 2 pm and Wednesday at 11:00 am. People who are interested or would like to know more can contact me.

Marc King,

42 Gillan St, NORMAN PARK 4170
Ph: 07-3899-8214.



Dear GR,

Re: In the Kitchen, page 50, GR128. I'm writing in to question the **LONGEVITY OF DRIED PULSES/LEGUMES** etc. It was stated in the article that dried pulses should only be kept for a period of 12 months before either being used or discarded, as they lose their quality and deteriorate. Can anyone tell me why? We have been buying bulk (25 kg bags) of legumes/grains for family consumption and our future wellbeing for the past six months now. Does the storage (eg kept in the light or dark) have any bearing on the shelflife? We have our legumes stored in plastic feed bins so that they are contained and kept away from all the little nasties that would like to share our food with us. We have been under the impression that when stored in this way the shelflife is quite long.

Can anyone give me any help in how to remove **RESIDUE GLUE** left on glass bottles. I've tried hot soapy water, soaking and scraping, all to no avail. Also has anyone got a recipe handy on how to make soy milk and tofu from basic beans (soy of course!)?

I would love to hear from someone soon.

Simone Maudsley,
103 Gresford Rd, GLENDONBROOK 2330.

Good storage such as you describe will extend the shelflife of pulses, but they will still lose their nutrient content over time. Stored food should always be rotated, not just put away and forgotten for years. Try putting jars in the freezer and scraping off the frozen glue.

Contributors and correspondents who want letters or articles returned are requested to include correct postage.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR,

I've been enjoying reading GR for two years. I've been getting a lot of wonderful inspiration from this wonderful magazine. It's also encouraging for me to know there are many GR readers (writers) who have been trying so-called alternative lifestyles. I believe though, for most of us, the lifestyle GR suggests is not alternative.

My husband and I recently moved to **JERVIS BAY**, the south coast of NSW, and we've been enjoying its beautiful natural environment and relaxed atmosphere. I've started to think seriously about making my dream come true: living outside of the big city (yes, it's happened already) and running a small farm or community garden where people can come and experience farm activities and growing vegies etc. Has anyone got any experience to tell, ideas, suggestions on setting up small farm tourism or garden tourism? Please let me know, perhaps writing to me is the best for me. I am interested in offering people hands-on experience with nature, soil, trees and other plants.

I'd also appreciate if any of you could invite me for a day or a weekend to your small but beautiful farm and garden around the south coast area. Thanks!

Tomoko Shiihe,
16 Berry Street, VINCENTIA 2540.

Dear GR friends,

I noticed that some of you are looking for instructions on **HOW TO PICKLE OLIVES**. I have a reliable method of treatment and will send it to anyone who encloses two postage stamps with request.

Lucy Dougalis,
18 Rockville Ave, DAW PARK 5041.

Dear GRs,

Unpasteurised goat milk has been available in Queensland for over twenty years through health food stores and local registered dairies.

The Labor Government has decided to ban this excellent product from December 1998, on the scaremongering premise that raw milk presents a danger to consumers. This is despite the fact that there has been no incidence of disease or illness in Queensland from consumption of this milk through registered unpasteurised goat milk dairies.

Registered goat dairies produce a clean, healthy product. The milk is tested by laboratory for bacteria count and the animals are tested for disease.

It is well known that **UNPASTEURISED GOAT MILK** is an excellent alternative for people who have allergies to cows' milk. Unpasteurised goat milk promotes strong bones and teeth. It is recommended by naturopaths, particularly for babies and convalescents who suffer from digestive problems, strokes, ulcers, asthma, congestion from excess mucus, eczema, arthritis.

This proposed ban on unpasteurised goat milk is unjustified and is a total denial of freedom of choice. Please contact me for more information.

Lynda Pickstone,
17 Mooloo Rd, GYMPIE 4570.

Anonymous letters will not be published. Please indicate if you would like personal details to be withheld.

Dear Grass Roots,

I discovered your magazine in our local newsagents just before last Christmas and thought it was great. Even my husband, who I always considered to be 'allergic' to reading, reads it from front to back. We bought our place 10 years ago. It had a badly rundown house on it and one acre of weedy overgrown land. After four years and four children we moved back to the city (Wollongong) for four years. We finally came back to try again. This time around things have been better. The house is nearly done, the vegie gardens going well, we are currently establishing an orchard. We also have chooks, ducks and rabbits (for eggs, meat, down and pelts), a goat for cashmere and to keep the grass down. I make bread, preserves, soap etc. There has been one drawback,

however. Walcha is a 'timber' town and with the main source of employment under a very real threat it has been necessary to tread carefully when introducing anything resembling 'green' ideas.

I do have a couple of questions. My husband and I are interested in **SMOKING OUR OWN MEAT**, but have found a distinct shortage of information on the subject. Can anyone help us? Also, is there **ANYONE IN THE WALCHA AREA** who is interested in organics and self-sufficiency who would like to get together occasionally for a chat and to share ideas? If so, I'd like to hear from you.

Julia Baldwin,

112E Jamieson St, WALCHA 2354.

Dear GRs,

With arguably the most sustainable cheap eco-house and edible garden in Australia, at zero cost we effortlessly ride through shortages, breakdowns and pollution of water, gas, electricity, heating, cooling, food supplies, transport, refrigeration or trash removal. Yet curiously, millions of equally ordinary folk in several cities over recent times can't themselves successfully handle any of these situations, nor can any relevant government or 'expert' suitably advise! The few who try solutions wind up with the most expensive, unreliable, inconvenient, ephemeral and polluting attempts.

Thus, Auckland residents over weeks of power-off reverted to motor generators rather than solar electric, or an extension lead to their car batteries for 12 volt home appliances. Sydney's millions, despite masses of community awareness, are totally unaware of small rain tanks plus an attachment to reject the first hour of dirt-laden rain storm. Now Melbourne's normally gas-guzzling populations are oblivious to simple bargain solar heating initiatives (even via a black \$ hose pipe), and cooking (via solar or a small wood stick stove, possibly vented with a tiny fan to avoid smoke), or multi-source gas/electric/solar power. Then we see grossly flooded China, Bangladesh, Australia, America, Italy etc suffering en masse from, often admitted, lack of trees, these having been pathetically and greedily ripped out over the decades or centuries. The need to plant billions of multi-use food trees all over is universally and monumentally obvious – not a few scattered token samples.

Come on, **WAKE UP TO RENEWABLE RESOURCES** you millions! My personal dream is a broad demonstration line of appropriate edible and native edible trees right across Australia.

Dr Pat ffyske Howden,
Cone St, MACLEAY ISLAND 4184.

Dear GR,

I recently acquired a **MATADOR HOME KNITTING MACHINE** from a garage sale for \$3. It's in good condition but has no manual. If there's anyone with a manual they would like to sell or photocopy, I would happily reimburse them.

Due to my son's need to attend a special school (autism) we have to stay within one hour of Newcastle for another few years at least. We would be interested in renting a farmhouse on the outskirts of Newcastle if anyone knows of one available. We have to pay off some more of our home here before we could afford to buy our own acreage.

Lisa Cooper,

38 Branxton St, GRETA 2334.

Dear GR People,

I just had to put pen to paper to let Sue, GR129, know what a chuckle I had over her contribution about **CHAIN LETTERS**. Fancy receiving 16,436 dogs. What a wonderful attitude! I can't believe anyone would be so mean as to pass them on to the authorities. I know there can be nasty ones threatening dire consequences if you break the chain. Use your common sense and put them in the fire.

I have heard the joke before, but it was very sexist and said husbands. I certainly wouldn't want to pass mine on as he is a treasure, but the dog, well that is a different matter.

Anyone in Bundaberg is welcome to give me a ring on 07-4156-1642 if they so wish. A newsletter of what's on in this area is in the pipeline.

Lynette Dennis,
8 Invicta Rd, AVONDALE 4672.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear Megg & Mary,

I wish to thank you for the entry of my letter in a recent issue of GR and would appreciate it if you could publish this letter of thanks. I received a remarkable response and assistance in many ways from Australian and New Zealand readers.

I have written my thanks to most everyone who was kind enough to give me the aid I so needed. I have been able to christen the use of my pressure cooker because of their help which was so generously given.

Because of my state of incapacitation, with only one leg, I have been tied up with doctors and hospitals. Some letters have gone astray in my absence, so I wish to take the opportunity to offer my sincere thanks to any folks to whom I have not been able to personally write.

Also, to those dear folks who wrote to me in friendship, I thank you very sincerely. Because of mail being misplaced I would like, very much to hear from you again and to have the opportunity to correspond.

I offer my grateful thanks to the publishers of this wonderful magazine.

Arthur Fergusson,
14 Long Gully Rd, GRANDCHESTER 4340.

Dear Megg and GR Readers,

I was introduced to GR five years ago and want to say thank you for an informative magazine. I haven't missed an issue since then. My favourite section is Feedback. Recently you had an article on OKRA and if any GR readers haven't tried it they are missing out on a treat. It's used whole in soups and stews, or stir-fried. Okra will grow easily in summer when most else fails. Pick them when they are no longer than 10 centimetres or they will be tough and woody. If GR readers grow lots of vegies, do join Seed Savers in Byron Bay.

Can any GR readers supply me with their favourite recipes for sweet mustard pickles, RELISHES OF ALL TYPES, including beetroot and pineapple relish using fresh or canned pineapple. Perhaps something unusual. Also FUDGE OF ALL FLAVOURS, vanilla, creamy chocolate, or any of your favourite flavours. Boiled Christmas pudding, using the unbleached calico method. Can anybody supply me with information, recipes and instruction on how to cook this delicious pudding? Any information will be greatly appreciated and will be passed on to other readers. Thank you all for making a magazine worth reading.

Patricia Schmidt,

9 Gilbert St, CABOOLTURE 4510.



Dear GR,

Has anyone got seeds for OXHEART TOMATOES, or any similar large tomato please? I like to make tomato sauce, so use lots in a batch. Also, a query: Has anyone got any ideas for SOFTENING TOE-NAILS? They thicken as we get older and are hard to cut. Any comments would be appreciated. Thanks again, I look forward to many more exciting hints.

Lyn Ballantyne,
89 North Deep Creek Rd, GYMPIE 4570.

Hello There,

Grass Roots reached 25 and I hadn't written to say CONGRATULATIONS and happy birthday. Megg especially, because she was there from day one, deserves a gold medal for her labours. However, credit not only to Megg and David and Mary, but to all who have worked at GR. A grand job well done.

I enjoyed Sunshine's recent contribution. I recalled a note from Megg and realised that it was 1984 vintage! What a lovely young woman you and David raised, Megg, and how generous you were sharing her with your readers.

GR and various readers have been friends for many long years, but I still eagerly anticipate each issue and devour the contents. The contributors always make it the best read in town. Thank you to all of them too. Of course, with the GR staff to facilitate the forum we are assured of a place to voice our opinions, express our concerns, share our skills and

information, and ask our questions too.

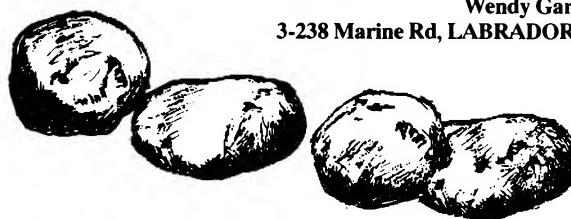
So thanks again to everyone at GR for all the years of enjoyment and knowledge. Thanks for the continued commitment to the ideal of craft and self-sufficiency for down-to-earth people. Wishing you continuing success.

Mrs H Flockhart Di Stefano,
4/19 Gooreen St, REID 2612.

Dear GR,

Thanks for a great mag, always full of wonderful info. Two things. Can anyone help me with the recipe and method for MAKING INCENSE, and also, what is the best way to store potatoes? Keeping in mind, the cockroaches love them as do rodents.

Wendy Garwood,
3-238 Marine Rd, LABRADOR 4215.



Dear GR Readers,

First letter to GR, although I've been a long-time reader and learnt heaps, chuckled some, written to a few.

Help! A plea for a (rural) room for a pony and me plus animals, somewhere to garden and be self-sufficient. Preferably close to central coast as my children and granddaughter are there and need to be near. A livable (power, tank water all I need) shed, cottage. I'm willing to repair, and enjoy building with wood and recycled stuff. Rent cheap or vendor finance. Good references. Needs to be near medical facilities. Which leads me to the second-last request. Does anyone have natural remedies for the myriad of problems caused by LUPUS SLE? Diet, exercise, hot water bottles, swimming, massage, meditation, I've discovered, but still am going insane with frustration, pain, tiredness.

Lastly, where are you brown-eye Ron Brown? Please write, like to keep in touch (Frog's mum).

C Kennedy (CAZZA),
C/- Twilight Caravan Park, 2430.

Dear Editor,

We are looking for information on how to RECONSTITUTE CAKE SOAP. We have been saving our small bits of leftover cake soap because we thought we'd seen a method for reconstituting it. But alas, we just don't seem to be able to locate those instructions.

Not being ones to let a little thing like a lack of reliable instructions stop us, we had a go. Ugh! Big mistake. The whole lot went kind of stringy. We added glycerol because we seemed to remember something about adding this to the molten mixture, but it didn't help. The outside solidified so quickly on the way to the moulds that instead of a smooth solid texture the result was thick fibres or cord-like structures with only a small amount in the middle of each cake the correct consistency and texture.

As you might have guessed, we need help. Not an article on making a soap from scratch please as that is entirely different to reconstituting the stuff. Perhaps there is a GR reader who might know?

Claire Hardman & Tom Schoeffler,
380 McCartins Rd, FOSTER NORTH 3960.

Dear Grass Roots Readers,

I have been an addicted GR reader for over two years now. Slowly I have converted members of my family into GR fanatics. I am now trying to put a book together on FAMILIES WITH THREE OR MORE CHILDREN and was hoping people might wish to share their stories, hints on raising a family, budget ideas etc. I would be very happy if they would contact me. The book I'm aiming at is the type of book that was unavailable when I had my children, so if there is anyone who has had a big family let's share a little wisdom and help others find their way.

Sharron Tyndall,
38-40 Eastern Court, RIVERDOWNS 4212.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR,

This is just a note to say thanks for publishing my letter in Feedback issue 129. It was about Braidwood NSW, but now my request is different. I would still like to hear about Braidwood, but I have learnt that I'm not very cold tolerant, having spent Feb-Aug '98 in Canberra! So I guess it's unrealistic to think I could live there.

I have moved to the coast at **MORUYA HEADS**, which is south of Batemans Bay and north of Narooma on the south coast of NSW, and I was wondering if any GR people lived around here?

Myself, Katrina, and my two year old daughter, Danäe, are looking forward to a long and happy life here, but we both would like some GR friends to play with. Can't wait to hear from anyone and everyone.

Trina & Nae,

176-28 Native Way, MORUYA HEADS 2537.

Dear Folks,

Could anyone give me info on survivalists, their reasonings and ideals, the practicalities, and also anyone's thoughts on the millennium 'bug', the possible consequences and what I could do to be more prepared in the way of food storage, money, etc?

Julia Forsyth,
7 O'Rourke Place, OTAKI 6471.



Dear GR People,

I've found an old copy of '**FOLK MEDICINE**', by D C Jarvis, which I'd like to give to someone. If anyone would like it please write to me.

I'd also like to correspond with anybody who's into finding pleasure in the simpler things of life. I'm a 33 year old single mum of three boys aged 12, 13 and 14, and enjoy fishing, reading and dreaming about everything and nothing that I'm going to do in the future, as long as it involves travelling.

Sandy Schadel,
53 Barbaralla Dve, SPRINGWOOD 4127.

Dear GRs,

After years of feeling sick, bloated and windy and undergoing all sorts of exploratory tests and being told by a doctor that he was sure he would find a large ulcer, I was finally told that I must have **TOO MUCH ACID**. So, on a naturopath's advice I tried this simple remedy and it worked.

Take a medium-sized potato, wash well, grate skin and all. Put into a medium-sized glass jar. Fill with water and put in fridge. Shake and let settle and drink a small glass each day. My doctor told me there was no harm in trying this for three months. I was so pleased to be able to give up white medicine and so much better. I think I took it on and off for 18 months. I was told to cut out acidy food and so I left off fizzy drinks, oranges, strawberries.

The brew goes stale in a couple of days, so make more. Keep in fridge. I found it wonderful. I have no trouble now with indigestion and can eat anything. I asked another naturopath what he knew about the potato and he said it was great, especially for rheumatism. A friend told me she worked at a hotel and a commercial traveller used to ask her to keep the water off the boiled potatoes the days he stayed there so he could drink it for his health.

Pearlie Lovelle,
200 Summerland Way, KYOGLE 2474.

Hello to All GR Readers,

Can someone help me please? I am a 19-year-old **VEGAN SEEKING FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT** in an alternative business with other vegans or vegetarians somewhere in northern NSW (Byron Bay, Nimbin, Lismore area) or north Qld (Cairns, Cooktown, Atherton Tablelands). However I will travel anywhere in Australia if guaranteed a job.

I am interested in working on an organic self-sufficient property, in a health food/New Age shop, retreat, vegetarian restaurant, as a nanny for a

vegan family, or helping someone with artwork. I am honest, reliable, hardworking and keen to learn. I have experience with cash registers, customer relations, gardening, cooking, caring for children and animals. I achieved good results at school (Year 12: 1st place English and Home Economics, overall position - OP score of 8) and am very artistic. I would even work in exchange for part wages and board with other vegan people. I know some GR person must need a hand and could benefit from my skills, likewise I could benefit from their employment! I am grateful for anyone's help.

Michelle Cross,

982 Bruce Hwy North, GYMPIE 4570.
Ph: 07-5483-1267.



Dear Grass Roots,

I have been an avid reader for yonks and used many tips supplied by GR followers. My thanks. Now I am asking for help: can anyone help with **HORSERADISH PLANTS**? I have tried everywhere and lost mine when moving. I am a Reiki Master/teacher and lightworker and send distant healings all over Australia at no charge, just a donation to cover costs of stamps, photocopying and any herbs supplied. I keep my costs and if there is any left over it supports a child in Africa.

I am 70 and have survived breast cancer. It is wonderful to feel one of those who choose to live their life the way God means us to and appreciate what we have been given.

A drink of a decoction of boiled pawpaw leaves and stems is good to use against cancer. Also immature green pawpaw just before it turns yellow is used in a drink (skin, seeds and pulp). Make it like a smoothie with banana and passion fruit if available, or anything else. It's full of enzymes for good health. If someone is ill drink this twice daily.

Mrs L J Ronald,
14 James Carney Cres, KEMPSEY WEST 2440.

Dear GR,

It took me back eight years, Liz, when you asked for recipes for an **ANTI-CANDIDA DIET** (GR129). Picturing Saturday mornings experimenting with potato flour which became glue; another day being most disappointed with the purple rubbery pancakes from buckwheat!

I'd been polishing off half a packet of sweet biscuits for supper and trying to resist my craving for chocolate.

Well, these days each vegetable has a lovely flavour (they all seemed tasteless or unpleasant before), and I crave for nothing. I'm over the moon that I'm now not reacting at all to yoghurt, which I'm actually making each day straight from the cow! (I'd had a minor reaction to it each time I tried yoghurt in recent years.) And, I'm feeling better for it.

I think eating high-nutrient whole foods has helped me enormously, and chromium in my vitamin/mineral supplement has overcome the craving for sweetness. High zinc and magnesium have been important too, so I enjoy the taste of foods more.

Then, it's been easiest to eat meat, eggs, vegetables and yoghurt basically, loads of vegetables. In a book by William Vayda he suggested this Mevy diet, and olive oil, almonds or walnuts or seeds. And what grain? He suggests the best being rice or millet. Yes, these are the only two that agree with me, so with organic flour (my baking powder and a little olive oil) I add boiling water for my little muffins, baked fresh each day. I react to dried beans and will try garlic again soon. I'm still very cautious with high carbohydrates, vegies even.

I've two really helpful recipe books by Richard Turner, and *Yeast-Free and Healthy* says it all. Have you seen Paavo Airola's *How to Get Well*?

The other cultured milk product I'm making each day is kefir and it really is reviving me. I can mail spare grains in a parcel to a few people who forward postage of \$3.20.

Dianne South,
C/- RMB 1417, BENALLA 3672.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear Sir/Madam,

With the recent **GAS SHORTAGE IN VICTORIA** we lost both hot water and cooking facilities. This has motivated us to become more self-sufficient and we are now interested in heating our hot water from a combination of heat from our combustion wood heater and solar heating. It has been difficult to get information and we would like to hear from anyone in the Melbourne area who has heated water this way.

R Lehmann,
1 Collocott St, MORDIALLOC 3195.

Dear GRs,

I am asking for the plans of how to go about **MAKING A CHIP HEATER** for the bath for hot water. I would be very grateful and will send postage expenses.

Mrs Thompson,

152 Russell St, CLEVELAND REDLANDS 4163.

Dear GR Editors,

At this age and stage I have asked myself why I am leading a lifestyle that does not satisfy my urge to travel, my desire to teach and learn, and my **PASSION FOR PERMACULTURE**. So I have done something about it and by now will be in Qld or NT.

I plan to travel both states and would like to help people design and establish permaculture gardens along the way. I have qualifications and experience in permaculture design and environmental assessment and management. I would like to hear from any individual or community who could use my skills in exchange for meeting my basic needs of food, shelter and friendship.

If contacting by email, because it's through a search engine, I think you need to type the message while on line.

Ron Downs,
C/- 6 Ruskin St, BERESFIELD 2322
Email: ronnium@yahoo.com

Dear Megg & Mary,

ANTS: In our kitchen, bathroom, laundry & loo. Can anyone suggest what to do? Spray the outside of the house with what to keep these pesky pests out? Something eco-friendly preferred.

GINGER BEER: Can anyone help me with the recipe for starting the 'plant', the daily feeding and the weekly bottle up. The one I had – but lost in some moves – had 6 or 12 sultanas to help start the plant and was a soft drink, not alcoholic.

ALOE VERA: Does anyone know how to store this plant as we have a big one in our newly purchased property and it will have to be removed. I would like to keep this aloe for current use and have started some new small ones for the future.

We have a quantity (20+) of old *Your Garden* magazines dated January 1950 through to December 1955. Does anyone know of their monetary value and where they would be best used? (If we decided to sell them.) Thank you, Megg, Mary and all your wonderful hard-working crew, this magazine is a vital link between like-minded people scattered over the states of Australia.

Anna Gear,
16 Inveray Ave, JAN JUC 3228.

Dear Everyone,

Thanks for your wonderful, absolutely essential magazine that I have read for 10 years now. My partner (John), our cat (Dusty) and I recently moved from Queensland, to New Zealand. We have toured the country in a Bedford Campervan and now found jobs on a dairy farm (1600 cows) 40 kilometres from Taupo in a cold wet area. I put all of our *Grass Roots* stocks in storage and now find myself requiring information that I know is in past issues. If anyone can help me I

need the **NEWSPAPER LOG** recipe, **HOMEMADE ICE CREAM** recipes and a recipe for my fingers that are dry, cracked and peeling. If anyone requires information on travelling in New Zealand I am happy to help. I always wonder about Iris Quigley (previous issues).

Judy Barnet,
RD3, State Hwy 5, TAUPO NORTH ISLAND, New Zealand.

There are various 'recipes' for newspaper logs. This one, from 'Living Better for Less', seems like the simplest and least messy to us. Start from folded side, roll up firmly and secure with a narrow strip of masking tape. Store for at least 6 months. During this time chemical changes occur in the paper and it burns with almost no residue (ash) left and burns like a piece of wood. By that time the paper has 'set' in the roll and does not come open when the masking tape burns through.



Dear Megg & Mary,

Boy did I get a **RUSH ON SEED!** Letters came from all over, and I mean all over. I even got two chain letters that I will be sending on in the shape of seed packets, so someone will read part of them. I still have plenty of seed left, but please let me know how big your garden is. Send five 45 cent stamps and an SAE. Short on stamps, short on seed. Thanks to all you people who sent info on shingles – very good. But I got a very poor response on the VW. People do not want to part with them.

A S Mann,
4 Cannon St, TOOWOOMBA 4350.

Dear GRs,

At a recent meeting in Brisbane, the **BAMBOO SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA** was formed. The Society will be incorporated in the very near future and in the meantime we wish to inform readers of the objectives of the Society. They are: to promote all aspects of bamboo interests in Australia, to promote opportunities for sharing information, education and awareness amongst the public, to circulate two or more publications per year and to encourage local chapters within the Society.

There will be a web page on the internet as soon as possible also. It is intended to have field days in various states to share information and to educate the public as to the beauty and uses of bamboo for enjoyment and profit.

The Society will co-ordinate and co-operate with the newly formed Australian Commercial Bamboo Corporation Limited for the best interests of the Society.

The membership fee is \$20/year for a regular active member, with other rates for supporting membership, corporate membership and affiliate membership. For information regarding membership etc please contact the address below.

Mr Kevin Lang,
Secretary, Bamboo Society of Australia,
PO Box 2, EUDLO 4554.
Email: klang@earthcare.com.au

Dear Grass Roots,

We have been subscribing to GR for a number of years and have had many hours of enjoyment reading the various articles and comments from readers. I am wondering if there is someone who could help me with the name of a book or patterns for **EMBROIDERY CARDS** (birthday or Xmas) made by pinpricking the design on to the card. I would gladly pay the cost of these. Thank you for a most informative magazine.

M Tessmann,
34 Arcadia Drive, BEERWAH 4519.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR & Readers,

I have just started reading this magazine and find it both enjoyable and refreshing. I would like to ask any GR readers if they can offer me advice on **BEDWETTING IN CHILDREN**. If there is any natural way that would help my son to overcome this problem? Also, my husband and one child are wheat-free and one is gluten-free; could anyone send me recipes please?

Claire Taylor,
12 Mahoney St, MUNDUBBERA 4626.

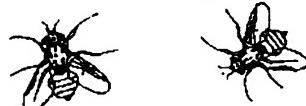
We have heard of success in stopping bedwetting by using lavender essential oil in an oil burner in the bedroom at night. Do take all safety measures if trying this. A naturopath would have more specific personal advice.

Dear GR,

Does anyone know of a surefire way to deal with **FRUIT FLY**. It has to be safe to use around kids, ducks and blue tongue lizards. Please write to me if you have some ideas.

J Hill,
41 Warabin St, WATERFALL 2233.

A comprehensive article about organic management of fruit fly was in GR 112. See last page for details of how to obtain back copies.



Dear GR Readers,

I'm wondering if anyone has visited, or been inspired by, the **FIND-HORN GARDENS** in Scotland. The community incorporates contact with 'devas' (nature spirits) to work harmoniously with the gardeners to produce amazing results. I'm also interested in hearing if anyone has had any experiences with devas, faeries or angels. If anyone has a story they would like to share, I would love to hear it, as I am interested in forming a network of people with an interest in the devic realms – more in relation to ecological harmony and peace than religion.

Also, is anyone aware of alternative communities/schools, organic food suppliers and vegetarian restaurants in the Hepburn/Macedon area in Victoria? We have just moved and we're not sure what's around. I would love to hear from you all.

Mimi Loois,
53 Cosmo Rd, TRENTHAM 3458.

Dear GR,

Thank you for an interesting, informative and very readable magazine. We bought our first copy recently and it fuelled our desire for the country life. With this in mind, we are planning to leave the city for the wide open spaces and would love to hear from ex-city dwellers about how they have **MADE THE TRANSITION** to a happy, simple, self-sufficient lifestyle – or even from those in transition.

Also, we would like to hear from folk in the **NAMBUCCA, BELLINGIN** area or the Narooma, Eden areas of NSW.

Alexandra & Mark,
51 Northcott Rd, CROMER HTS 2099.

Dear GR Friends,

Many thanks to you all for a fabulous publication which has kept me inspired and dreaming for the last ten years. Over the years there have been many requests for information, hints and tips from readers who are contemplating **THE GREAT TRIP** around this lovely country of ours. Now it's my turn. Despite all the cries of family and friends that I'm a mad woman, the decision is made and April/May of 1999 sees the beginning of a great adventure. The problem (for others) lies in the fact that I am a single mother of a 10 year old daughter and we will undertake this trip together for a year in a campervan. I would love to hear from anyone who has gone before me about how they managed, particularly with children; some do's and don'ts, not to miss experiences etc. Anyone who would like to meet somewhere along the way for a cuppa and a chat or somewhere to park our van for a few days in exchange for a pair (and a half) of willing hands for some help around the home/garden. This

request, I know has been made many times in past issues, but of course the advice goes directly to the writers, so could I prevail upon you once more to put pen to paper and if nothing else reassure me I'm not mad.

Jo Porter,

10 Valley Rd, HAZELBROOK 2779.

Dear Megg, Mary & GR Readers,

Thank you for your inspirational articles and letters. We are interested in any advice readers can give us about organic and permaculture techniques appropriate to our situation. We have just moved to **PICHI RICHI PARK** in South Australia. It is in the Pichi Richi Pass 25 kilometres east of Port Augusta. The Pass is about five degrees Celsius cooler in summer than the gulf plains and the inland plains beyond Quorn. There is some frost, and generally some rain each month. Nights are idyllic and a favourite occupation is to watch the moon rise beside Devil's Peak across the valley. The Park is just over 1000 acres and consists of both sides of an unnamed range (the highest peak is 450 metres high). There is one lower slope of about 10 acres that is arable. We hope to share it with two alpacas. At this stage we share with kangaroos, rabbits and a wide and wonderful variety of lizards and goannas. The house and our tourist business (accommodation, camping and conference/function centre) is here.

We think we have almost every prickle and plant pest known to South Australia. Advice please on how to **ERADICATE HORE-HOUND AND THISTLES** without spraying! The thistle is very small and has hard, sharp leaves capable of cutting skin through clothing. It is possible to mow with a whippersnapper, and much of it will be, as it is a fire hazard. A friend suggested spreading potash or other element lacking from the soil to deter weeds. Does this work?

Can anyone advise on the **FLAMMABILITY OF MULCHES** and plants? There are no plants, other than some large potted trees, within three metres of a building, although there will be grape vines, wisteria and roses gracing pergolas in the future. All building verges will be paved or covered with small stones suitable for walking.

We are planting strong herbs, such as rue and thyme amongst the vegetables in an attempt to deter rabbits and kangaroos, as fencing is not an option. Hot chillies may also be effective. Has anyone had any success with this? A mobile chicken run is on the agenda, but what is used to keep snakes, goannas and foxes from digging underneath? The lower edge of the structure will be solid with a 90° angle at ground level. It still needs a skirt to take in the unevenness of the ground. What have others found to be effective? We welcome suggestions and support.

Robin and Gordon Faulkner,
Pichi Richi Park, PO Box 117, QUORN 5433.
Ph/fax: 08-8648-6075.

Dear Grass Roots staff,

Readers might be interested in knowing the new address for the **ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION RESOURCE GROUP INC**: PO Box 71, Chirnside Park, Vic 3116.

AERG

Dear Grass Roots,

Just writing to give readers a **LETS UPDATE**. Did you know that there are over 160 LETS systems in Australia? Local Energy Trading Systems (where members trade goods and services for units instead of dollars, thereby using an alternative currency system which takes the pressure off Australian dollar resources), are thriving in Australia. This year marks Brisbane LETS 10th birthday and a big year it has been too. We are extremely proud of how many goods and services are available on LETS units these days. We even have permaculture certificate courses available for all LETS units! For some info phone Katy Pattinale 07-3892-6510.

Katy Pattinale,
PO Box 589, FORTITUDE VALLEY 4006.

Please keep letters brief, clearly written and relevant to self-sufficiency topics. Letters pushing barrows (religious, political or other) will not be published.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear Folks,

Oh my! There was so much interest in our back-to-basics **AMISH/MENNONITE ASSOCIATIONS**, that we compiled an Amish/Mennonite Resources Directory! We will contact the folks who wrote asking about this as soon as possible, sorry for the delay. If any other folks are interested, they're welcome to write to us too (an SAE appreciated).

Mrs L Danen,
612 Anzac Ave, TOOWOOMBA 4350.

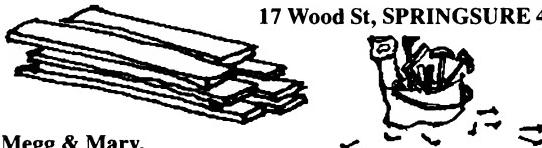
Dear GR Readers,

We have just moved onto our own little patch of heaven in Queensland (seven acres).

We would greatly appreciate any information regarding owner building A **SIMPLE CHEAP HOME**. Having never built anything larger than a tool shed before, where do we start? We will need a home on steel stumps, as we will need to catch any available breeze in hot months. We will have town water, but will need a septic tank. Would like at least two bedrooms, and to be able to put a verandah all around as finances permit. We will be building on the side of a hill. Hoping someone, who has been there done that, can help. Many thanks for a great magazine.

Pam Brown,

17 Wood St, SPRINGSURE 4722.



Dear Megg & Mary,

I must put pen to paper about the sweeping **STATEMENTS ON SUGAR** in the stevia story on page 56, GR129. I am 71 years old and have taken sugar in my tea and the same with my family and I'm the youngest. I have an eldest brother of 83 years, another is 81 years, a sister of 78 and another brother of 75 years. None have suffered any of the things quoted in the article, despite us all taking 2½ teaspoons of sugar in our cups of tea and we would have eight cups of tea daily.

My name was picked out at random on the computer at Shenton Park hospital to go for tests for an aneurysm and while there they tested my blood pressure and the nurse was very happy with it also. I passed all tests. They were also surprised I filled the form in without glasses. So sugar is not all that bad and after 71 years I'll still take it.

Ken Hamilton-Brown,
27 Anile St, BELLEVUE 6056.

Dear Grass Roots Readers,

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AUSTRALIA is presently being formed. It is a nonprofit community-based organisation being established on five acres at Hemmant, suburb of Brisbane. A multi-skills, self-sufficiency, self-help, self-employment, small business training programme which is based around organic gardens, and marketing enterprise is designed to self-fund project operations.

An important aspect is to deliver a community service in conjunction with experienced and innovative public health nutritionists who work with people teaching organic gardening principles and learning important cultural food practices from migrant groups living in their particular areas. In an effort to improve nutrition through home gardens, we wish to encourage people across Queensland to start up networks in their towns and villages and to involve public health nutritionists. We can commence saving seeds of nonhybrid fruit and vegetables, cuttings, bare root plants and exchange with each other. GST has become a worry in so many families where incomes are low and the cost of living ever rising. Many people are not making the best use of their backyards. Now is the time to start. Let's start a trend improving nutrition through home gardens. It's the very best thing we can do for our families. Join us. Let's support each other.

Eve Nathan,
27 St Catherine's Tce, WYNNUM 4178.

Dear Readers,

I am always on the lookout for **ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRODUCTS**, so I immediately bought a bottle when I saw Charlie Carp Whole Fish Fertilizer. It is made by an Australian owned company: Four Seas (NSW) Pty Ltd, 436 George St, Deniliquin 2710. There is an analysis of the product. It is concentrated and should be diluted one part to one hundred parts of water. It is not expensive at \$10 for a one litre bottle.

Healthy Life Products were another good find. Australian owned, made locally (in Jamberoo) from natural products, what could be better for the balance of payments? When I first heard of a herbicide made from orange peel, I went looking for the manufacturer – and it turned out to be Healthy Life Products. They make other products such as fertilisers, which are more readily available than the orange peel product which generally has to be specially ordered through one of the nurseries that stock their products.

Penny Ferguson,
65 Cotteril Ave, WOONONA 2517.

Dear GRs,

Following the publication of Sue's article on **WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN EATING?**, well over 12 months ago, she is still receiving letters from readers who want to know more about the diet. Love to know how many people have had any success with it. Lots of letters read as if they are a carbon copy of our situation before we got the family onto the diet. At last count there were at least 185 replies. Maybe we'll not get any more if they keep addressing them to 'Feindgold Diet' as the PO won't know to redirect them.

John & Sue Turner,
PO Box 51, ULVERSTONE 7315.

Dear Grass Roots,

Susan Dehn's article on **RESCUING NATIVE BIRDS** (GR129) was timely. Yesterday, a young noisy miner bird, with feathered wings, downy breast and a short, stumpy tail hopped around our garden, piping for attention. 'She's fallen out of her nest,' we said. 'Better rescue her before the cat arrives on the scene.' However, remembering Susan's advice ('first try to locate the adult birds'), we decided to entice the cat into the house and then to sit a short distance from the fledgling to wait. For a quarter of an hour, the youngster hopped and fluttered, keeping up a constant cheeping, but no adult birds appeared. We fetched a box, just in case.



Then an adult bird flew onto a branch above the fledgling, looked us over, uttered a few relaxed cries (nothing like the shrill screeching we have learned to associate with miner birds protesting!) and . . . waited. It was as though an assured calm descended on us all. The fledgling, apparently curious rather than distressed, took the opportunity to improve her hops and flutters as we and the guarding adult bird quietly watched.

Suddenly a second adult swooped to the ground, carrying a large piece of food. Excited jiggles and beak stretching from the youngster. Half the food deposited in the fledgling throat, the adult flew off to deliver the rest to the nest (where, we later learned, a second fledgling was still safely housed).

For the next hour or so, the whole process was repeated a number of times. We and the 'guard bird' moved occasionally as the fledgling's flutters became more adventurous and more food was shared out. As dusk approached, the flock began to gather. Several adults flew above the fledgling, and then, resting on low branches and calling, directed her across the garden towards the fence line, where there was a sapling casuarina she could climb for a safe night's roosting.

The next morning our inaction was rewarded when two fledglings and attentive adults re-appeared in the garden.

Janet,
WANGI WANGI, 2267.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

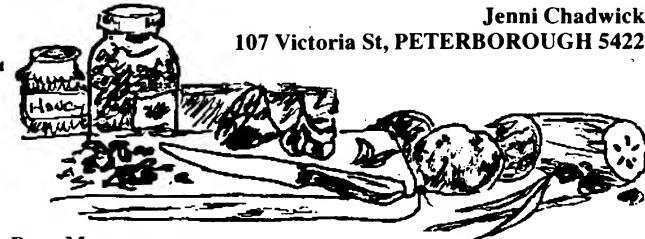
Dear Grassrooters,

I suppose that my story could be called 'I thought I was doing the right thing'. I have always tried to provide my family with a healthy diet and then last year my oldest daughter was diagnosed with kidney failure. My ideas on diet had to drastically change; she was on a high fat and sugar, white bread, extremely processed diet. Then my husband discovered he had a starch intolerance and so I had a second diet to cater for. My second daughter was then diagnosed with ADD/ODD. People thought it was odd that I chose to try the diet for this when there are so many effective drugs (my stubborn aversion to drugs). We have found that her biggest enemies are preservatives and salicylates (which are found in most fruit and vegies). Is there anyone else out there who has an **ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TASK IN THE KITCHEN?** I feel like I'm cooking for a restaurant every night. I'd love to correspond with anyone who has to deal with any one of these diets, who can help with new ideas for recipes to stop my cooking from being so bland and boring, or who also has to deal with several different diets so that we can offer mutual support.

I enjoy *Grass Roots* and have done so for about five years. We moved to the country three years ago in the hope of one day being at least partially self-sufficient. We haven't got very far yet, but we've got a lifetime, and if there's one thing I have learned it's that rushing things just tends to stress everyone out. Good luck to everyone in all their ventures.

Jenni Chadwick,

107 Victoria St, PETERBOROUGH 5422.



Dear Megg,

I am happy to report that the Renewable Energy and Sustainable Living Fair, mentioned in my article in GR129, was an enormous success and was deemed to be so by the organisers, the exhibitors and the visitors. We had nearly 6000 people here on site over the two days and nearly 200 made a tour of the house.

Belinda and I are still recovering, but it was well worth it. There was a real impression that the '**RENEWABLES' MAY HAVE COME OF AGE.**'

John P Morgan,
PO Box 197, DAYLESFORD 3460.

To The Editor,

We are needing advice from you or any readers, who have had dealings with State Environment Planning Policy No. 15, which is known as **RURAL LAND SHARING COMMUNITIES**.

It was put into place by the Labor Government in NSW, as of 9th April 1998. We are three families who have been living on 200 acres (80 ha) at Kempsey for 13 years and wish to use this policy and are desperate for information.

Any information will be well received. My fax/phone: 02-6562-5088. Email: Hasway@midcoast.com.au

Frank Said,
PO Box 230, WEST KEMPSEY 2440.

Dear GR People,

A hearty thank you to the caring community of hardworking staff, contributors and supporters who create and sustain this endearing magazine.

Firstly, I am wondering if anyone has had a **HYPOTHYROID CONDITION** and found a natural cure? Also, if anybody out there knows of an area or community where home schooling families are welcome and valued within the wider community? Or perhaps any areas with a higher-than-usual concentration of home schoolers, support networks etc.

Are there any single-parent families (or others) who manage to combine home education with a home business and/or any degree of self-sufficiency who would like to share some of their thoughts or experiences with me? Any insights on these matters would be most appreciated.

Anita,
PO Box 84, GATTON 4343.

Dear Grass Roots,

Congratulations on a most excellent magazine. I've been a reader for a couple of years now. Recently picked up most copies from GR numbers 19-97 in an op'shop for \$2. What a blessing. Countless hours of reading and much information. I'm seeking help on the **TREATMENT OF OSTEOPOROSIS**. My dear mum is 82 and suffers greatly from this terrible problem. Any readers know of a means to treat it? I'll appreciate any help.

Midge Holman,
291 Bamawm Rd, BAMAWM 3561.

Dear GR,

Thank you for a wonderful magazine. I am a devoted reader and regular purchaser. Re GR130, page 46/47, letter from W Wangell, PO Box 59, Sorell 7173. Letter to same was returned undelivered by Australia Post. As I would like to contact W Wrangell re the article can you assist?

Nina Chalker,
6 Maxwell Rd, HACKHAM WEST 5163.

Perhaps if W Wrangell is reading he/she will respond to Nina. We have no other contact address.

Dear Readers,

Having consulted various books, friends etc to no avail, perhaps I should have thought of GR common sense long ere this on a very vexing problem. My friend's two year old **SUFFERS DREADFULLY FROM ECZEMA**, on the face and legs particularly. This becomes worse of course as he rubs off scabs and life has been quite miserable for him. Friend has tried allergy tests, diet change, cortisone creams, antibiotics, sea water bathing and a host of other possible solutions, all to little or no avail. I feel he cannot be unique and am hoping someone has a solution for him. Would be very grateful for any information at all concerning this problem.

Kay Edwards,
2/1 Stedman St, BUNDABERG 4670.

Dear Reader,

Would Deb who was after information on **MONTESORI AND STEINER EDUCATION** and advertised in Gr 125, please contact the GR office with her address. Also, **WILLING WRITER** from Feedback 130, we have some letters for you and no forwarding address. Please contact us.

Kim Bennetts,
C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

Dear Grass Rooters,

I am running out of avenues. Can anyone help me to locate a book published in 1994 called *Jekka's Complete Herb Book*? It is a very informative book, providing extensive details on hundreds of herbs for growing techniques, culinary, medicinal, warnings etc, along with pictures. I wish to buy two books if at all possible.

Barbara Bathurst,
PO Box 368, ST HELENS 7216.

Dear GR,

About plastics. I decided to remove as much of the **UNRECYCLABLE PLASTICS** from my house as I could. Those plastics that don't have the arrow symbol on the bottom won't be picked up when you put them out to be recycled so they end up in with the other garbage. Now I buy anything but plastic. I look carefully at the packaging and if it can't be put out to recycle I won't use it.

P Freeman,
HAZELBROOK 2779.

MINIMAL IMPACT BUSHWALKING

If you're planning to enjoy the delights of walking in the bush over summer and autumn, consider the following. Increasing numbers of bushwalkers visiting national parks, wilderness areas and other reserves are causing serious damage to the natural environment. The Minimal Impact Bushwalking Code is a new bushwalking ethic supported by ACT Parks & Conservation Service, NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service, Department Conservation &

Natural Resources and Tasmania Parks & Wildlife Service. Some of the advice in this code is:

* Stay on walking tracks even if they're rough and muddy since walking on track edges and cutting corners increase damage and erosion and cause confusion about which is the right track.

* Carry out all your rubbish – don't bury it as animals may dig it up and digging disturbs the soil.

* Wash 50 metres away from streams and lakes and scatter the wash water here so it filters through the soil before returning to the stream. Use gritty sand and a scourer instead of commercially

made detergents and soap.

* Always carry a fuel stove when camping since compared with campfires they are cleaner, easier to use in wet weather and they don't scar the landscape. Remember, neither open fires or fuel stoves can be used on days of Total Fire Ban.

* Help prevent the bacterial parasite giardia from spreading by using toilets if available or where not by burying faecal waste fifteen centimetres deep and mixing it with soil to aid decomposition. Do this at least 100 metres away from campsites and water courses.

FOR SALE

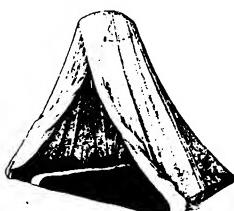
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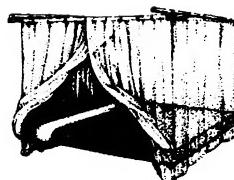
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"The 'Gift of Heaven' from the High Country"

FROM IRONBARK TO GIDYEA SCRUB

by Karen Long, Isisford, Qld.

It's hard to believe it was that long ago - GR 25. Yes, that's me on the front cover, at the back looking straight at the camera. That was my first association with GR. A teacher at St Peters Lutheran College, which I attended, wrote an article on Ironbark - the school's outdoor education centre - and used photos the school had taken of our hiking group. This led me to purchase the magazine, which I have continued to purchase ever since.

A lot has happened since that photo was taken. I was in year 10 then, and went on to finish high school and gain a place studying an arts degree, majoring in geography, at James Cook University in Townsville. I continued to read GR, and, as my studies of the reef, national parks, weather and conservation issues progressed, some of the GR ideology meshed with my studies to form a wider global picture.

After completing my degree I gained a position with the ANZ bank in Townsville. I established my first vegie garden, tried various crafts, recycled and kept reading GR. I also got married, and together we purchased 40 acres with a view to eventually living there.

I switched employment to the Taxation Office, which proved very interesting. While assessing tax returns and talking to people I found out about various agricultural ventures; which were working (ie making money) and which were not. In 1988 Dean was born and GR helped me with ideas about economical baby goods and food.

In 1990 my husband had had enough of driving long distance coaches and wanted to be home more. He wanted to go back out west to work on stations where I had originally met him.

The first position we obtained was on a station between Hughenden and Muttaburra. This new environment meant I had some new skills to learn and I had a chance to put some GR ideas into prac-



Karen being presented with her Graduate Diploma in Education, undertaken to assist with her children's home schooling.

tice. The isolation meant we had to increase our level of self-sufficiency and rely on our own skills more. We killed our own sheep and cattle for meat, planted a large vegie garden and prayed for rain to fill the rainwater tank for drinking water. I learnt how to drive on dirt roads and how to get out of a bog. I learnt about sheep - crutching sheep, shearing sheep, and how stupid sheep are! I also learnt about cattle (they're smarter - sometimes). The station was

very old, with a lot of history and quite a few graves, which were very interesting. We also had two major floods while we were there.

Our next move was to a station between Hughenden and Richmond. Here isolation was not a great problem as we were close to a sealed highway. Privacy was a problem, with four families, workshops, sheds, yards and the shearing shed sharing an area of two acres. My second child, Jade, was born

while we were living there. Not for me the choice of a home birth, midwife assisted, or which hospital to attend. Having had a Caesarean with Dean, I had to go to Townsville to have Jade, as small country hospitals simply aren't equipped to do Caesareans. The price of country living! We also sold our 40 acres, as work commitments would prevent us from ever living there.

We moved south to our present position in 1992 on Mt Marlow. Here our nearest major town is 200 kilometres away and the nearest hospital 130 kilometres. Our nearest neighbour is 16 kilometres away and the Flying Doctor visits once a month.

It has been said that 'necessity is the mother of invention' and I really believe it is. GR has probably influenced my life more in the past eight years than ever before. It has been a source of ideas, inspiration and hints for me. Besides producing all our own meat and as many vegies as possible, the station also has an orchard. I make preserves and freeze or bottle any excess produce. We have learnt to be mechanics, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, teachers and Jacks (and Jills) of all trades. We are also involved in many community organizations and activities.

While at Mt Marlow I had my first article published in GR 97. Although I had written the odd Feedback letter and answered a few queries I hadn't had much contact with other readers. After the article was published I had some lovely letters from readers and have made some strong friendships - Ruth in Kyabram, Jenny in Brisbane and Anne outside Barcaldine. I have since met Jenny and Anne and our families catch up with each other as often as possible. With diverse backgrounds, ages and employment, we swap ideas and experi-



The Long's house at Mt Marlow Station - the nearest neighbour is another house on the property 16 kilometres away.

ences, plus stories about our kids and grandkids.

In recent years my children's education has become a priority. I completed a Graduate Diploma in Education externally to improve my skills and ability to teach my own children. Part way through my course, a school bus run commenced, so now Dean and Jade attend the local primary school, 30 kilometres away. I put my new skills to good use by supply teaching at the school. Since my article on Distance Education was published in GR 125, I've received phone calls and letters about home schooling with people trying to become as informed as possible about the subject.

The GR ideology is coming to the forefront today as we all try to make less of an impact on this earth. Recycling,

materialism, conservation issues and family values are prominent topics in today's society. GR people and their ideology were well ahead of their time 25 years ago. If we continue to be forward thinking, what a better place Australia will be for it.



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KIDS PAGE

Shell Wind Chimes



Many of us will have had fun collecting shells at the beach over summer. What to do with them now? Try this idea sent into us by Sherryn Savage of Currumbine, WA

You will need

- shells
- scissors
- nylon fishing line
- PVA glue
- cardboard

Method

Cut out a circle of cardboard (about 7cm in diameter). Ask an adult to poke fine holes through the cardboard using a darning needle (about eight around the outer edges and one in the centre). Thread about 30 cm of nylon fishing line through each hole and knot the ends. Glue a large shell over the cardboard so that the knots are not seen. Find a smaller shell with a hole in it. Thread about 45 cm of nylon fishing line through the hole and knot it. Glue the smaller shell onto the larger one, covering over the knot. Turn over and thread a variety of shells onto the fishing lines. Knot the bottom of each line to keep the shells from sliding off.

What Are Shells?

Shells are houses for animals called molluscs. Molluscs all have soft bodies and they retreat into their shells for protection from predators and the environment. The mollusc's shell is made by the animal's body and grows as it grows. When molluscs die, the shell is washed around by the sea and may be washed ashore. When you are collecting shells at the beach, always make sure there are no live animals inside them. If there are throw them back into the sea.

Brighten Up Your Lunch Box

Use permanent Textas, glitter or fluoro glue pens, stickers and/or cut-out images from magazines to personalise and brighten up your lunch box. Put your artwork mainly on the lid because it doesn't usually need thorough washing daily. The container part of the lunch box often has to be thoroughly washed so your creations may wear off quickly.

Lunch Box Treats

Isn't it great when you have something yummy in your lunch box ready for morning or afternoon play or lunch? Here are a few recipes for delicious, healthy and easy to make treats ready for your lunch box.

Apricot Bites

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup finely chopped dried apricots
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup ground or finely chopped almonds
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp orange juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup honey
- 1 cup skim milk powder
- 1 tbsp wheat germ
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sultanas
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup desiccated coconut



Method

Combine apricots and water in a saucepan, bring to the boil and simmer until just tender. Remove from heat, add remaining ingredients, mix thoroughly. Spread mixture into a lightly greased shallow baking tray or dish and refrigerate for several hours. Cut into bite-sized pieces.

Weet-Bix Balls

- 9 Weet-Bix, crushed
- 1 cup coconut
- 1 tbsp cocoa
- 1 cup mixed fruit
- 1 tin sweetened condensed milk
- extra coconut for rolling

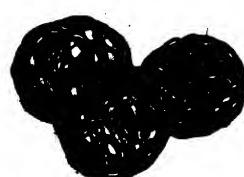


Method

Mix dry ingredients together in a bowl. Pour tin of condensed milk into bowl and blend well. Roll mixture into balls and coat in coconut. Refrigerate to store.

Carob Hedgehog Balls

- 1 cup dates
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 cup whole almonds
- 1 cup shredded coconut
- 2 cups rolled oats
- 2 tbsp carob powder (you could use cocoa)
- 2 tsp vanilla essence
- 3 tbsp apple juice concentrate



Method

Put the dates, raisins, almonds, coconut, rolled oats and carob powder in a food processor until mixture resembles fine bread crumbs. Add vanilla essence and apple juice concentrate and continue blending until well mixed. Roll into balls. Keep in the refrigerator.

IN THE KITCHEN

In this issue we celebrate the abundance of summer vegetables from our backyard gardens – tomatoes, beans, cucumbers, zucchini, to name but a few.

Zucchini are best picked when small and firm. They can be steamed, stuffed, baked, stir-fried or eaten raw. When it comes to zucchini, we are only limited by our imaginations! The danger, however, is that no matter how imaginative we are, by the end of summer we will be relieved not to have to face another zucchini until next year's glut! But try these recipes to make the most of our prolific friends.

ZUCCHINI AND CHEESE SALAD

This is a very simple dish, suitable for the whole family. If you have children who are not fond of zucchini, this is a good one to try as the combination of cheese and zucchini seems to appeal to younger palates.

handful of sesame seeds

Equal quantities of:

grated zucchini

grated Edam cheese

Dry roast sesame seeds in a pan over a low heat until golden brown, then cool. Mix grated zucchini and cheese and sprinkle with sesame seeds.

ZUCCHINI AND GARLIC ANTIPASTO

3 small zucchini, sliced

Marinade:

3 lge cloves garlic, minced

2 tsp capers, chopped

virgin olive oil

balsamic vinegar, or good squeeze of lemon juice

½ tsp sugar

Steam zucchini lightly and refresh under cold water. Dry on absorbent paper. Mix marinade ingredients well and combine with zucchini in a bowl. Refrigerate and leave to marinate for a few hours or overnight. Drain off excess marinade and serve zucchini on an antipasto plate with a selection of olives, sundried tomatoes, salami and crusty bread. Excess marinade can be re-used as a salad dressing.

RAW VEGETABLE SALAD WITH YOGHURT DRESSING

1 carrot

1 capsicum

2 stalks celery

1 sml cucumber

handful green beans

Cut all of the above into julienne strips.

1 lge, ripe tomato, diced

Dressing:

1 tub yoghurt

1 sml salad onion, diced finely

generous handful mint leaves

Mix vegetables together. Mix dressing ingredients together. Serve vegetables with a generous dob of yoghurt dressing.



ROCKET AND PEAR SALAD

Rocket is a beautiful deep colour with a distinctive spicy flavour. It is very easy to grow. In fact it is decidedly unfussy about where it lives and can be found coming up amongst weeds in neglected corners of the vegie patch, or even colonising the lawn. Rocket can be eaten raw or cooked, but when cooked it loses its spiciness. It's at its best mixed with other, milder lettuces in a mixed green salad or with luscious tomatoes. Try this simple but stunning combination.

1 ripe but firm pear, sliced and core removed

bunch rocket

good quality olive oil

lemon juice

black pepper

Arrange rocket leaves in a shallow bowl. Place pear slices on top of the rocket. Drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice. Add black pepper to taste.

ASIAN-STYLE SILVERBEET SALAD

Silverbeet is another champion of the vegie patch. It just keeps on keeping on! This recipe combines the earthy flavour of the silverbeet with a powerful dressing – it's not for the faint-hearted!

silverbeet leaves, with stalks removed

1 carrot grated

1 cup salted peanuts, roughly pounded

Dressing:

2 cloves garlic, minced

slurp sesame oil

slurp soy sauce

Slice silverbeet leaves finely. Mix with grated carrot and pounded peanuts. Mix dressing ingredients well and toss with salad.

APPLE AND CINNAMON CAKE

This recipe comes from Joy Wyld of Hornsby – thanks Joy!

2 eggs

125 g butter or substitute

185 g sugar

250 g self-raising flour

½ - ¾ cup milk

2 lge apples

2 tsp cinnamon

2 tbsp sugar extra

Chop butter or substitute. Place the first five ingredients in the mixer. Mix on slow speed until combined, then on high speed for a further three minutes. Peel, core and slice apples. Fold into the cake mixture. Pour into a 20 centimetre square lined baking pan. Sprinkle combined cinnamon and sugar on top. Bake in 180°C oven for 40 - 45 minutes. Serve hot or cold with cream.

ZESTY HEALTH DRINK

Make a refreshing, vitamin-rich drink by vitamising different combinations of fresh veggies and herbs with tomatoes. Try tomato, red capsicum and basil; tomato, cucumber and mint; tomato, radish and spring onion. If you like it hot, try tomato, chilli and rocket. Dilute with cold water to taste and pour over ice.

SHEETS IN THE WIND

by Pam Cole, Tuncurry, NSW.



Watching my daughter-in-law measure billowing metres of creamy unbleached calico for first-home curtains, the mounds of stiff creamy cloth with their crisp-but-stuffy smell reminded me of my childhood. Mum always made our sheets of this material. It was not until my sister and I began our 'glory boxes' – the 1950's buying-up of household linen and articles to store against one's wedding day, known as the hope-chest in other days – that any ready-made linen entered the family home.

'Pooh, we don't want *that!*' Mum's standard response to anything we couldn't afford, was tossed scornfully in the air as we bypassed the shelves in the manchester department of country stores, heading for the rolls of unbleached calico at the end of the counter. This was her depression and wartime catchery, used to summon up courage in the face of adversity and carried over into the rest of her hard-bitten life.

To the assistant, hovering behind the counter, measuring tape around shoulders and scissors in hand, it was –

'Morning Mr Bible! Double-bed sheeting please.'

'Certainly Mrs West. Bleached or unbleached?' And a discussion of qualities and prices would follow, amid the proffering and fingering and sniffing of various calicos and the rapidly pencilled arithmetic in pound-shillings-and-pence, yards-feet-and-inches. Beds came in single, three-quarter and double sizes, sheets and sheeting in widths to match; and then there were the calculations of and possible savings on the amount left for turnings and hems.

Enormous quantities of crisp creamy cloth with its faint flecks of grey would be doled out, measured and cut, finally tamed into folded piles and held captive inside

brown paper and string ready to be lugged home.

'Bags the paper!' was the next cry, followed immediately by, 'Oh you mean pig I was going to say that!' For new brown paper was just the shot to cover school exercise books. The more affluent were rumoured to *buy* theirs (where, we wondered?), the cunning and cute wheedled supplies from shopkeepers, but mostly you cadged it any way you could from household accumulations. Sprinkling and ironing crumpled brown paper was the very devil of a job and not for the impatient. So you took your chance at 'bags-I-first' when freshly wrapped parcels arrived with the shopping.

At home Mum developed a pink nose and red cheeks as she knelt and unfolded, measured and cut, crawling around on the Feltex to move about what looked like enough calico to sail a ship.

The selvedges she left untouched. Why hem them, when they already provided firm edges for her sheets? The tops and bottoms of each piece were hemmed differently, narrow at the foot and wider at the top, and, as the top sheet was habitually folded back over the blankets, its hem had to be turned in opposite fashion to the foot one; the 'raw side' was never to be exposed.

Pins were employed. Stout white cotton whizzed onto the bobbin of the treadle machine and the bobbin was then popped into its bullet-shaped shuttle. Discreetly ladylike spittings of thread-ends

(Ptt! Pttpp!!) accompanied the threading of machine and needle. It would be 'bread and duck for tea tonight', as Mum thrashed and treadled away all afternoon, neatly and precisely hemming all those acres of calico.

Once hemmed, the sheets were washed to remove the dressing, that stiffening agent used in the production of calico to impart its smooth sheen. The sniffing process during purchase was to determine the amount of this dressing, for it could be heavily employed to disguise poorer quality cloth. Hence the ritual of sniff-and-rub-with-the-fingers to estimate the quality.

Once dried, the new sheets remained stiff and crackly, softening and smelling less of dressing as successive launderings took place. This calico could be bleached by repeatedly washing and drying in strong sunlight, but this was a bit of a time-consuming luxury. In any case, with the passage of time, the unbleached material slowly assumed the snowy whiteness of its more expensive counterpart. In those days, the difference in price between the two materials was so considerable as to make it Mum's regular choice. I think we stunned her by squandering our pay cheques on ready-made sheets, boxed at that!

But by the time we were at the marrying stage we'd reached Daruka days, and one of the highlights of Mum's year up there was the visit of the Lincot Man. He was a courteous gentleman of mature years who visited the area annually with

suitcases of his company's wares. Good quality, thick, closely woven, plain in colour, lavish in size - Mum had nothing but praise for his goods. Every year she ordered bath towels of naturally beige unbleached linen, thick and pleasantly rough, of excellent quality; or proper linen glass cloths for the wiping-up; or sheets of stout and cosy flannelette and her favourite cream calico. Rotated thus, in three-year cycles, the household's sheet and towel needs were amply met, for such good quality lasted way past the next delivery date. The goods arrived as ordered, bulky parcels on the mail truck, and just like Christmas in the unwrapping.

As sheets wore thin in the centre, all mums, ours included, did them 'sides to middle.' This meant to rip the sheet in half from top to bottom, fold and hem the raw edges, and join the good sides together to form the centre of the sheet. The old outside edges were usually selvedge (or the hems removed if need be) and the join was 'properly done' with a flat run-and-fell seam so as to minimise the discomfort of lying on a seamy middle. It was like the side seams of your jeans, except that all raw edges were folded under before stitching flat, not left exposed.



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Sheets thus treated served well for another span of years and then joined Mum's stock of Good Clean Rags. Boiled clean and put away, useful bits of these could be torn off for use as hankies, in those pretissue days; nappy-liners and other hygiene items; pudding cloths patches on worn clothing or tablecloths; hair curling rags. Or they were torn into strips for bandages. Mum was pretty good at estimating the right size for any injury and tearing little strips still attached to the main part of the bandage to tie it to the injured limb. A big square of old sheet became the special pudding cloth at Christmas time, and dusters, doll's clothes and polishing-

rags were made of any tattered scraps.

Another use that has just come to mind was the torn strips to transfer drips of water down the sides of the hessian Cool-gardie safe.



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CLOTHES WASHING TIPS

from June Birkett

Old-fashioned clothes washing has almost been forgotten and yet so many of the old ideas are invaluable. To retain colour in clothes, strong colours (blues, red, etc) should be soaked with half a cup of common salt or vinegar in a washing basin for 1-2 hours before washing as normal. The salt seals in the colour rather than washing it out in the first wash. Stains should be soaked. Clothes heavy with dirt should be soaked in washing soda and warm water, the soda is a water softener and the dirt falls away in the water.

Strong powders can be used, it is true, but many women (myself included) can develop dermatitis from the use of them. Washing fine clothes such as satins or silks in rainwater is gentle on fabric.

Clothes should always be hung up after use and wool fabrics should be brushed regularly. Leather shoes should be polished once a week and brushed between polishing. Keeping things clean stops wear and tear.

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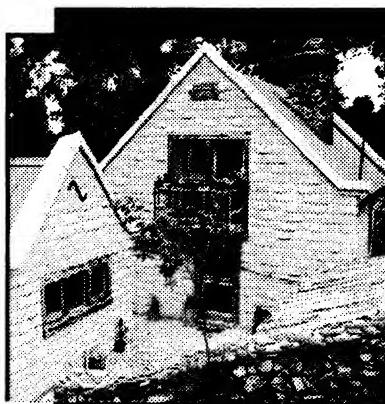
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A HAT FOR A BUS

by Andy Bullock, Repton, NSW.

For people of limited means moving to the country, one form of comparatively cheap and comparatively instant accommodation is a pensioned-off bus. Jenny and her son Chris live in a double decker version – well actually it provides their bedrooms, Jenny's downstairs and Chris's upstairs (they have a separate modest kitchen/living area).

The bus is rather characterful and you get a great view from the upper deck, but it did have its drawbacks. On a sunny day the upper level got as hot as Hades under its low metal roof. In rainy weather the all-round windows, so good at letting in light and air, also let in water, since a bus has no eaves. And let's face it, the many seasons which had elapsed since its heyday conveying passengers over the Sydney Harbour Bridge had taken their toll, despite the shell being aluminium. Since I had stuff stored over the driver's cab I shared their concern over this state of affairs and was prevailed upon to seek a solution.

A roof over the bus was the obvious answer. But how? Pole frame construction is common in our area, but it's a long



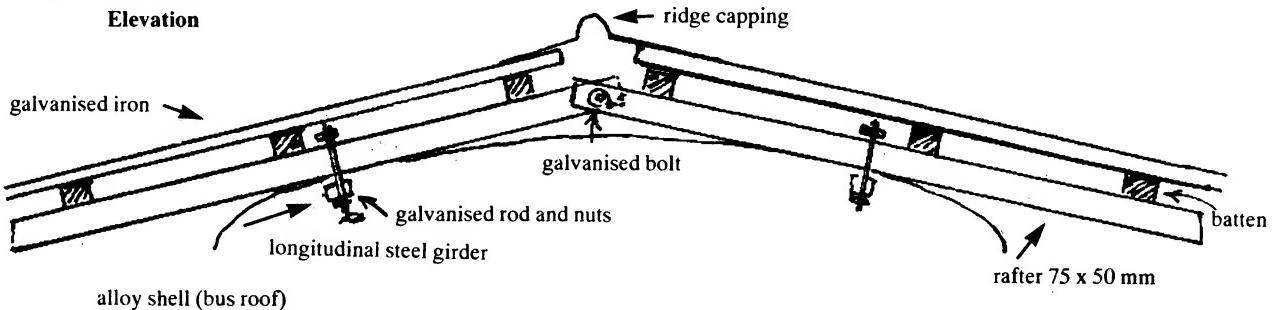
The double-decker bus with its new roof for weather protection.

way up to the roof of a double-decker bus, requiring long poles. Also, it would be preferable to have the new roof permanently attached to the bus so it would

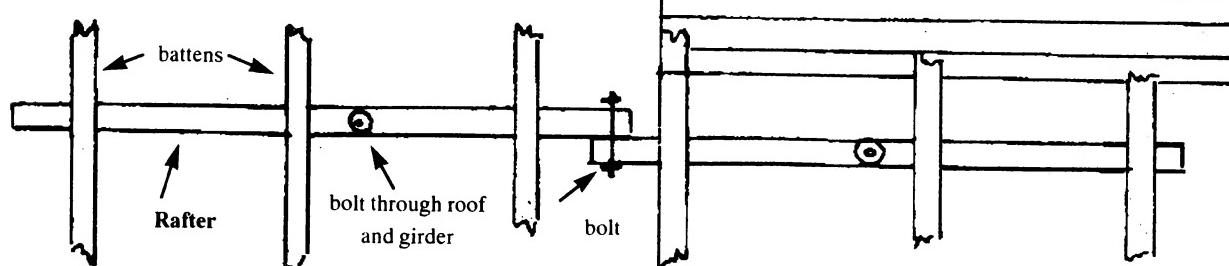
remain with it if it were ever moved or sold. I prised away some of the ply ceiling upstairs and found there were two girders running lengthwise under either side of

Attachment Of Roof To Bus

Elevation



Plan View



the bus roof. An idea began to gel. I took some measurements and got out the pencil and paper.

The construction method that emerged was as follows: Pairs of rafters were made on the ground by bolting two-metre lengths of 75 x 50 millimetre hardwood together at their apex. These were then bolted to the roof through the longitudinal girders. The holes in the rafters had been predrilled at a position which created the desired pitch – not too steep, so that the tin could be attached comfortably from on the roof. Threaded galvanised rod (10 mm) was cut to make the bolts. Battens were then attached in the usual manner; no ridge timber was needed.

At each end of the bus, two hip rafters joined into the ridge. The tin was nailed on, except over the eaves where less rigidity meant that roofing screws were easier to use. Generous 900 millimetre eaves were provided. We had the use of a long extendable ladder, but care was still needed getting up and down. Fortunately, I managed to avoid any inadvertent bungyless bungy-jumping.

Not having the luxury of electrical power, only hand-tools were used, which afterwards I felt quite smug about. Holes were drilled using a large hand-drill. Galvanised iron was cut using tin snips for cuts across the sheets, while a tomahawk struck with a hammer did the diagonal cuts needed to make the end pieces, the ridge capping hiding any lack of perfection in the cuts. All materials were second-hand. After construction was finished old nail holes were filled with silicone sealant and the roof painted.



Close-up view of the bus's new hat, now Jenny and Chris can enjoy the wet-season rain in comfort.

The bus's new hat made it look even more quaint. Moreover, it achieved its objectives splendidly. Wet season rain can cascade down while all windows remain open and upstairs is habitable in the hottest weather, insulated from the sun by the air space under the new roof. Finally, the old girl's longevity is greatly extended by the roof shielding her from the elements.

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AGROFORESTRY

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

by Bev Lynch, Mt Barker, WA.

Throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s an awareness developed in our farm management that somehow we had to arrive at a balanced farm economy, using trees as well as pasture and crops. We needed to place enough trees and perennial grasses in the landscape to control groundwater, but not decrease the earning capacity of the farm as a whole. Our movement towards such a plan has been ongoing and a learning process.

Our farm is fifteen kilometres west of Mt Barker (south-west Western Australia) in a 700 millimetre rainfall area. Medium to heavy soils – jarrah, marri, wandoo type. We have three winter flowing creeks running through the property. Unfortunately, we do not control the headwaters of any of them. Clearing began on the farm in 1962 and was completed in 1972. All the property was pastured except for shade and shelter (not enough) and eight hectares of bush for timber.

Looking back now, it is very hard to say what actually started us on any form of conservation work. Maybe a desire to aesthetically improve the property was why we began to look at it more closely. No doubt it influenced us in the early stages. Certainly, our need for a timber resource was an influence. All the buildings on the farm had been built with timber from the farm and we could see that we were running out and had no replacement. When Ian was left a small legacy by his grandmother, we decided to use it to plant a small woodlot. The area we selected was a very degraded creekline with hillside seeps showing up. All the large trees were dead and stock still had unlimited access to the area. One of the main reasons for choosing this particular site was because we would not be losing any good ground.

We contacted the Forests Department in Perth, outlined what we wanted to do and asked for information on how to go

about it. After some time an officer from the Manjimup office contacted us. Our timing had been perfect. The Department was looking to expand into lower rainfall areas than those in which they had traditionally operated and our project was just what they were looking for. So a mutually profitable association was formed: they supplied the trees and the know-how and we supplied the land and the labour.

We planted 2300 trees that first year (1983) – 1600 eucalypts and 700 pines. The area was deep-ripped, sprayed with Vorox, fenced, and trees planted three weeks after spraying. By Christmas some of the trees were two metres high, but one month later we had one eucalypt and 50 pines left. Wingless grasshoppers had eaten the rest. Subsequently, we learnt to control these pests – but that's another story.

'... more and more people were becoming aware of waterlogging and salinity. We attended many field days... One of the main things we learnt from that time was that drainage on its own would not do the job and trees on their own would not do it either.'

With the encouragement of the Forests Department we replanted the following year. Twenty-three different types of eucalypts were planted and from this original plot we can now determine the best trees for our area.

Our original intention was to run stock through these trees when they had grown sufficiently – we estimated about three years. However, it was five years before we allowed them access because we had such large numbers of self-sown wandoo and melaleuca that we wanted to allow them to grow up as well.

Because of the close plantings (3 x 3 metres) we found that after a couple of years grazing we had very little pasture left amongst the trees because of the shading and moisture stress. In early

1989 Peter Beatty from the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) spent two days with us showing us how to prune and thin the trees. This will be an ongoing process. Where this management has taken place we are finding more and more clover coming back, due mainly, we feel, to more light penetration.

Our grazing management of the woodlot area now is to allow stock access on a limited basis. When grass is green and as it dries up or they have eaten it, the gate is closed. Also, we have found that when the pines are pruned and the needles start to turn yellow, the sheep eat both the needles and the small branches with relish.

By late 1984 more and more people were becoming aware of waterlogging and salinity. We attended many field days and looked at different types of drainage and tree growing. One of the main things we learnt from that time was that drainage on its own would not do the job and trees on their own would not do it either. There is no way a tree will grow well with wet feet. Therefore, a combination of the two seemed to us to be essential.

With these ideas in mind we arranged an on-site meeting in late 1984 with the Department of Agriculture, Forests Department, two upstream neighbours and ourselves. We wanted to draw up a plan to control waterlogging on a twelve hectare area adjacent to one of our creeks. The problem we had was not of our making, but was coming from upstream, and what we had to do was persuade the two neighbours to use drainage and tree planting to control their water and prevent it spilling out onto our saucer shaped problem area. What we hoped to do was follow up their work with our own the following year. However, as it turned out, the farmer at the top of the catchment said he didn't have a problem – his bare patches were

only where he had spilt some chemicals when he was doing his firebreaks! The farmer in the middle was not sufficiently convinced of the merits of the plan. So, faced with this, we decided to bring our own programme forward a year and hope to at least stop the problem from becoming any worse. The Department of Agriculture agreed to survey the drains for us and the Forests Department agreed to supply the trees. We decided on an agroforestry type planting using pines and eucalypts.

Three shallow grader drains were placed on the eastern side of the creek and one bulldozer interceptor drain with grade on the western side. The central creekline was dug out with a backhoe to a depth of one metre. The Department of Agriculture were not happy with this drain because they feared it would erode badly. However, five years later it was holding up extremely well and the marks of the backhoe were still clearly visible.

It was decided to plant trees on the drains both upslope and downslope. The drains were spaced to allow for full-width runs with farm machinery. *Pinus radiata* cuttings and eight species of eucalypts were supplied by CALM. Puccinella was planted on what we regarded as the more saline area and tall wheat grass on the areas we regarded as being waterlogged only. The remaining area was planted down to oats for hay. The drainage took place in February 1985, the oats were planted in June 1985 and the trees in July 1985.

As always, Murphy's law prevailed. Firstly, the pine cuttings were a disaster. We had notified CALM when the plants arrived that we felt there was not enough root establishment, but they said to go ahead and plant them anyway. Some of the areas recommended for pine plantings were not suitable, so most of the

pines either died or did not grow at all.

We had a very dry beginning to winter that year, but when it rained it really rained and large numbers of trees were washed away or drowned out. However, the drains were working really well.

Consequently, we had to look at a fairly large replanting the following year. One good result we had was that our neighbour immediately above us decided that he wanted to go ahead after all, which meant we were able to work on an integrated system of drainage which has proved to be enormously successful.

Next time I'll describe the benefits of agroforestry once our plantings became established.



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CONSERVE BATS REDUCE DISEASE

by Alan Stewart, Alexandra Hills, Qld.

A matter of concern for Australian health authorities is the prospect of mosquitoes carrying the malaria parasite moving down from PNG and Indonesia. In fact, mosquitoes with this parasite have been found in the Mackay area. This will have serious implications. Ross River and dengue fever, and now Japanese encephalitis, are already problems and malaria is something we can well do without. Control measures will be required.

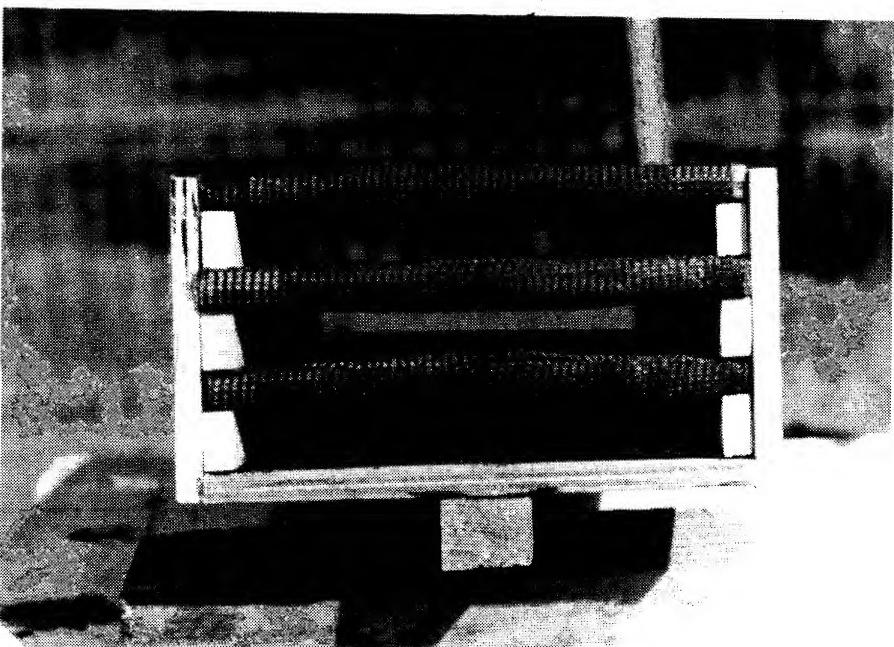
However, the first line of defence should be mother nature. Insectivorous bats are voracious predators of mosquitoes. Providing suitable housing for these tiny bats, especially in mosquito-prone areas, will help to alleviate what may turn out to be a very serious problem. If the boxes are installed in swampy areas, or anywhere else where mossies are a nuisance, the bats will not only have good accommodation but a source of food as well.

A bat box is a little more complicated to build than a plain four-sided box, but by following the instructions it shouldn't be too difficult for the average handy-person. The outside dimensions are not really very important. Boxes can be quite small, holding perhaps a dozen or so, to quite large ones holding perhaps 60 plus. What is important is the inside structure and here the 'rule of thumb' is what counts, but more of that later.

MATERIALS

If readers can get hold of any recycled plywood (exterior) all well and good, but the purchase of new stuff should not break the bank. Either way the result will be well worthwhile. Some small strips of timber and shade cloth offcuts or flywire, a tube of Strongbond or Liquid Nails, and some galvanised nails will provide the bats with five-star housing!

Finally, a decent paint job in green, grey or brown acrylic (no oil paints) will give the box an extended life span. The box should be located in a north-easterly direction and well out of reach of vandals. In some cases it can take a while



Frames in position inside bat box. Your thumb must be able to fit between them.



The finished bat box, painted and ready to position in a tree – high enough to escape vandalism if possible.

for bats to use the boxes, in which case a speedy, though less than elegant, solution is to spray the entrance with some diluted bat poo, if some can be obtained (not flying fox poo).

CONSTRUCTION

The dimensions shown in the diagram are suggestions only. If scrap material is available, use it and adjust the size accordingly.

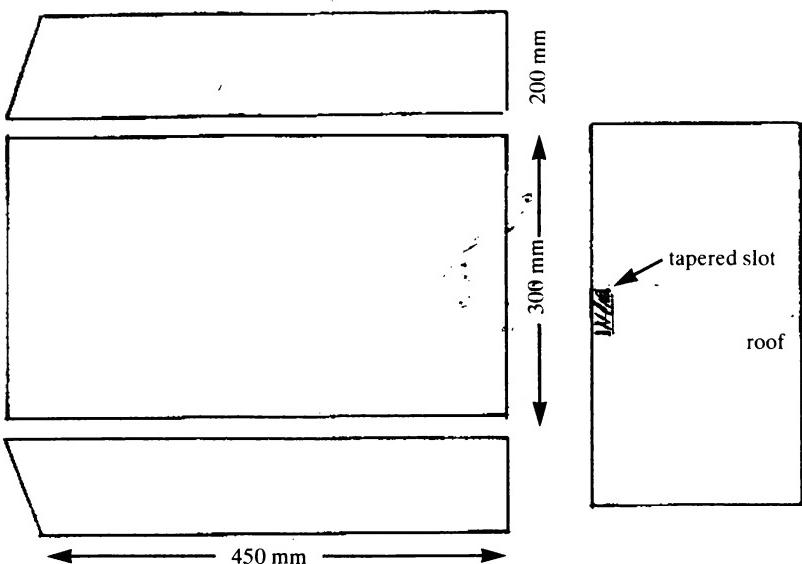
Cut out back and sides. Glue and nail sides to back, making sure they are at right angles. Leave to set.

Now glue and nail fixing post to back. Cut out shadecloth scraps or fly-wire to back and staple same. The rule of thumb, or 25 mm, now applies. If the thumb will go in sideways the bats can get in. Each clinging frame must be this distance from the next (see photo).

To make the frame any scrap wood will do. Measure and cut to size. Cut halving joints and glue up. Leave to set. If preferred, use plywood for clinging frames. Cut shadecloth to fit all around frames and staple in. Now glue and tack in frames.

Cut out roof, leaving a decent overhang. Cut out a tapered slot, the same angle as roof. This will ensure a snug fit

Bat Box Drawing



to fixing post. Use a generous amount of glue (Liquid Nails) and nail to back and sides.

Cut out front to fit and butt in firmly. Glue and nail in place. When nailing plywood, drill a slightly smaller hole than the nail, to prevent any splitting.

The bat box is now finished and should be completely weatherproof. Exterior grade plywood doesn't need painting, however, it is recommended, if only to make it less obtrusive and thus less of a target to vandals. Grey, green or brown paint will do, or a mixture of all three.

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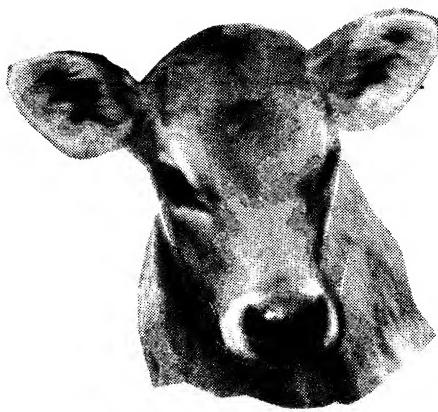
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CALF CARE

FIRST DAYS

by Colin Turton, Newstead, Vic.

I hope this article on calf rearing, by spreading practical enlightenment to *Grass Roots* readers, will ease the burden on a number of so-called dumb animals. It is to be mainly on calves, but will, of necessity, contain information on 'adult calves' as well. I should begin by stating my qualifications on the subject. I was raised on a dairy farm in South Gippsland in the 1950s and have raised an average of three or four calves every year for the last twelve years. So far I have not lost a calf, although I did lose a five-month old weaner to what the vet reckoned was a twisted bowel. It had actually succumbed to bloat from feeding on lucerne hay, which astounded everyone, the vet included.

There are a number of ways in which to obtain a calf. You could buy a cow, either young or old, either in calf or not in calf. You could attend a calf market and buy a 'week-old' calf, or you could even buy a weaner or a yearling. I will try to explain terminology as I go along. A weaner is a calf which has been weaned off milk but is still under twelve months old. A yearling is between one and two years old.

To my mind, a self-sufficient holding would almost necessarily include a house cow. She is capable of supplying not only all of your milk, cream, butter and cheese and of raising a steer a year for the freezer if you are that way inclined (and I am), but she can also give a substantial return in actual dollars. It is illegal in Victoria to sell milk which is not pasteurised so I do not sell milk, I sell shares in the cow, then charge a fee for my time to milk the cow for the shareholders and to feed and look after it (the cow) for them.

I don't intend to cover all breeds in this article because beef breeds can usually look after themselves, so long as they are properly tended and have not been with a bull too early. All heifers should definitely *not* go to the bull

before they are eighteen months old, unless you own shares in a veterinary business. The only exception to this is the Jersey, a pure Jersey can go to a Jersey bull at fifteen months of age if, and only if, she is well grown. If she has not been raised properly as a calf and is for any reason small, she should not see a bull until she is eighteen months old.

The quickest way to owning your own dairy is to answer an advertisement in your local paper and buy a house cow, which may well cost in the vicinity of \$500. I know people who spend more than that on milk alone in a year, so as you can see the rest of your dairy produce is a bonus, not to mention the possibility of \$2500 worth of prime beef in your freezer!

I do know of quite a few people who have what they loosely term a 'house cow', from which they periodically take a litre or so of milk and leave a calf or two running in the paddock with it. That

only gives you a few litres of milk and a calf or two, and eventually a cow with no teats. To me that is a complete waste. As can be seen above, a house cow can be 'milked' literally and euphemistically for considerably more than a few litres of milk.

We will get onto calves shortly. I will assume that the holding, be it one acre or one hundred acres, is already set up with fencing, shedding, stalls or milking bails of some sort before the cow or calf is purchased. Actually, a milking bail is a very good idea in preference to just milking in the paddock, as at some stage or other you will ultimately need a vet to tend to your cow, and the vet will not enjoy chasing it around the paddock.

Let's assume that your house cow has just given birth (with no complications whatsoever) to a slimy little blob of yuck and you are standing there watching her licking all this yuck off this brand-new calf. Your first job, if the cow has not



A Jersey calf will repay your care and become a productive house cow.

already done it, is to make sure that the calf's nostrils are clear of any of this yuck (mucus). Use your hands if you like, but an old towel kept for this purpose is fine. The calf will, or should, try to stand up long before the cow has finished cleaning it. I have seen a very strong calf stand up within five minutes. After a difficult birth it may take up to an hour. As soon as it can stand it will start looking for the milkbar. If you have never seen this before, then you are in for a bit of comic relief. Just remember that you know what and where the milkbar is, the calf has only been here for a couple of minutes and is running on pure instinct. If you have a really quiet cow you can sometimes help the calf a bit with its first feed.

Another thing you will need to watch for is the afterbirth. The cow will normally lie down again shortly after giving birth, to discharge the afterbirth which she will promptly turn around and eat. It is widely accepted that this action stimulates the letting down of the milk. You need to keep a fairly close eye on her to make sure the afterbirth has been discharged, as if it is retained it will become putrid inside the cow and cause an infection which may very well kill your new cow. Then you will have to buy a powdered milk substitute for the calf, which is very expensive and not anywhere near as good as the real thing!

You will find that the milk which the cow has after giving birth is an orange-like colour and is very sticky or claggy. This is called colostrum and the calf must drink some of this milk in its first feed. It contains some special antibodies and also purges the gut. It will disappear from the milk after four or five days.

Now, here comes the really hard part for all the new chums, particularly all the

city slickers. If you intend to milk your cow, and I am now assuming that you are, the calf is to be taken from the cow at twelve hours old, or the morning after it was born. Being married to a city girl myself I had a devil of a time convincing my wife that this is by far the least traumatic for both cow and calf. I used to leave them together for two days, but my wife has finally agreed that the twelve hours is by far better, particularly with regard to teaching the calf to drink.

Here is a little tip while we are at this stage: Don't take the calf away from its mother somewhere down the back paddock, take it away while the cow is having a feed of bran and lucerne chaff in the milking bail. The reason for this is that she will continuously return (bellowing) to wherever the calf was when she last saw it. She will bellow for the calf for about a week, but it will not answer her because you are feeding it.

The calf will only eat and sleep for the first week or so and it needs to be confined in a small area, not necessarily indoors, but certainly out of wind and rain, preferably in the warm sunshine, but not in forty degrees either! I usually keep my young calves in a portable sheep yard which is 2½ metres square and move it around the orchard every couple of days. Some time ago I made quite a number of 2½ metre panels, primarily as portable sheep yards, but they have a multitude of other uses. I do this for a couple of weeks until the calf drinks from the bucket with little assistance, then it is put in the calf paddock. This paddock has no special size, just some room to run around in.

While the calf is confined in the small pen I exercise it outside the yard for a few minutes on a tether after each feed, this can be a dog's lead or a piece

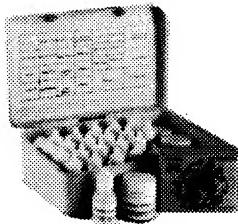
of hayband. After about the second day the calf will want to have a bit of a run and jump about immediately after you have fed it, so while it is restrained on the lead you will be able to make sure it does not run into things and hurt itself.

After the first couple of weeks of mother and calf being separated, you should be able to put them in side-by-side paddocks if you really need to. The cow will normally show some interest in the calf, but the calf will largely ignore the cow because the calf now sees you as its mother. The calf will just have a quick sniff and then run off and sniff whatever else catches its eye. If you do not have to keep the two of them side by side then I would recommend not doing so, as the calf will probably end up putting its head through the fence and sucking the cow dry, if the cow allows it, and they quite often do. So I try to keep them separated by at least two fences.

You can raise one or two calves quite successfully 'on the bucket' by simply feeding them from the bucket on the ground in the calf paddock, but I find it convenient to use calf bails in a small calf shed. The shed gives shelter not only to the calves in inclement weather, but also to the poor unfortunate sap who got the job of feeding them: twice a day, every day, for at least twelve weeks. I feed all my calves milk for at least sixteen weeks. You will have to have a good grip on the bucket too because young calves are very good at butting the bucket and saturating you with milk, then you also need to replace the spilt milk. A two or three week old calf is surprisingly strong!

Next time I'll discuss how and what to feed your calf and how to wean it when the time comes.

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BUYING A FARM

MOVING DAY AT LAST

by Pat Coleby, Maldon, Vic.

Your choice of locality must take into account your tolerance to heat, cold and wet; it is not always a question of mind over matter (it can be), most people have a preference and perform better under their ideal conditions. Some prefer to live in the hills, others feel shut in when they are in a valley. Think seriously about the latter and the danger of floods; 1998 saw far too many areas inundated which had houses built on flood plains.

You should always view prospective purchases on a dull day. Study the trees, if they all lean over one way and you do not like living in a gale, it is not for you. Also, find out where the prevailing wind comes from, the incidence of frosts and so forth. Never believe the seller on the last one; mine here unblushingly told me that this place never got them! Six weeks at least of below zero minimum temperatures (sometimes as low as minus seven degrees) is the norm each winter.

FIRE PROTECTION

Fire protection is largely good management, and hard work. Obtain and read some of the excellent booklets circulated by the CFA on the habits of bushfires. We were lucky in that we lived in an area where fires were common and we all learnt the protective farm drill and how to cope with them fairly soon. Our village was burnt out in 1965 and the children were got out of school three minutes before it was engulfed. Consequently, all the young (four) grew up knowing the ins and outs of fire fighting – our youngest daughter was I think the first woman to have a firetruck driving licence in Victoria.

TREES

If possible, opt for a farm with mature trees – they make shelter for growing more. Trees do not like being on their own. If the

former owner was keen on superphosphate and whatever they added to it, do not worry if the trees look sick; they respond to remineralisation quite magically. We only lost one tree (from a drought three years later) on the Gippsland farm and they all had dieback when we bought the place.

IRRIGATION

Irrigation sounds nice in theory, except that in a bad drought it usually does not operate. Better to make your own provisions for hard times by studying P A Yeoman's methods. In his book, *Water For Every*



A farm with established trees is a good option, they'll be of enormous benefit to you.

Farm, there are excellent ideas which can be adapted to many terrains. Irrigation sounds marvellous, but it is hard work and, when badly carried out, very environmentally unfriendly. It is not just a question of having the water turned on – the next few hours are spent redirecting and monitoring the flow (the irrigator's badge should be crossed shovels) and it's nonstop when the water is running. Yeomans' methods show how to reticulate water stored at the top of a farm down through to where it is required. Australia is not so much short of water; holding it where it is needed – in the soil – is the problem.

HOUSE AND SHEDS

Avoid a small farm with a very large modern house, it puts your land value at an unrealistic level. Better a reasonable size soundly built house that you can work on in your 'spare' time. If you are all young and fit, consider the many advantages of mud bricks; they'll give you a cheap house that is warm in winter and cool in summer. Do not make the mistake of an architect I once knew who thought he would build it far quicker if he made the bricks about a metre long by thirty-five centimetres each way. He could lift them on his own, until he got to shoulder height! That house cost a fortune to build.

Always go for a place with sheds, even if they are not very grand. Putting up new sheds is very expensive and involves a lot of red tape. Old ones can be fixed up quite satisfactorily if they were well built originally. Always take the advice of an experienced shed builder.

EASE OF OPERATION

I am inherently lazy, it's a great advantage when considering ease of operation. Do time and motion studies and never travel further than you have to. Moving heavy weights may seem insignificant at first, but it soon becomes a real bind. If feedstuffs or other materials have to be delivered, make sure that it can be done easily and quickly, without bogging the trucks or taking the operator hours carrying things around corners.

When setting up yards and doorways (one never seems to have enough of either) do things on a temporary basis for the first few weeks to see if your plans really are the easiest way of operating. Then you can make them permanent. A good sized cordless rechargeable drill and tek screws should be used wherever possible; like a

chainsaw it is a quite invaluable tool. The screws can be taken out with equal ease if they are in the wrong place.

MOVING DAY

Our progressions from one farm to another were mostly done by ourselves, except for the house contents. We hired trucks with lifters on them for the farm tools and the Fergy and took as much of the so-called rubbish (building materials) as possible. One garage where we stopped for petrol asked my son which tip we were bound for as he wished to follow us there! All the material found a good home in a comparatively short time.

Animals

If you are moving with farm animals that you already own, naturally their welfare and containment must be your first priority. Overfeed them with hay en route from your old place to the new, having let them become slightly hungry first so they arrive satisfied. If going from drought conditions to lush pastures (and possibly unhealthy ones), keep the food up to them until they settle in and you can do something about the land. All stock should be moved into their new quarters as quietly as possible. Aged 16, I had to take delivery of a mob of

cattle, as my father was away from home. The driver backed the truck into the paddock, threw down the tailgate, rushed the cattle out (literally) and they kept on rushing, through every fence for ten kilometres, took me days to get them back. They should, of course, have been run into a yard with plenty of hay and left to settle.

Plants

Moving plants and trees under three years old can fairly easily be accomplished if you fill a trailer with a mixture of good compost and soil about three months before the date. You just plant them all in it and keep them happy. They can stay quite safely in the trailer for the first week or two until you have time to deal with them. I have never lost a plant or a favourite tree when using that method.

A FINAL TIP

A word of warning: have a large basket of essentials – not food, that is easy enough to get, but the wherewithall to eat and prepare it. It took me a fortnight on one move to find any knives, spoons or forks! If, like me, you have huge quantities of books, milk crates and cardboard boxes galore are the only answer, and remember they have to be lifted up!

Well you got there! In about three years time you will draw breath and be able to sit back and enjoy it – perhaps!

This is the final article in a series of six from natural farming expert Pat Coleby. We're grateful to Pat for sharing her knowledge and personal experiences. For those who missed any articles in the series, back copies are available. Also available are the following books from Pat Coleby: *Natural Pet Care*, *Natural Horse Care*, *Healthy Land for Healthy Cattle*. See subscription page for details.



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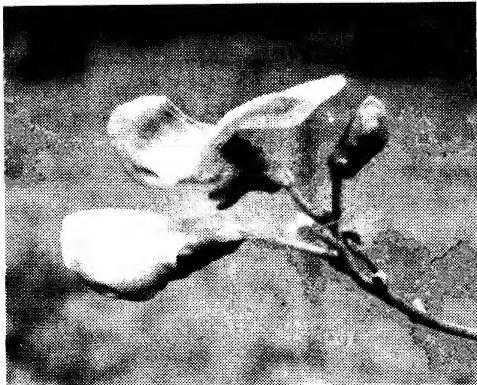
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WINGED BEANS

by Zig Madycki, Jabiru, NT.



A very versatile plant indeed is winged bean, *Psophocarpus tetragonolobus*. Underground it forms a tuber similar to sweet potato. The stem twines anticlockwise and produces somewhat delicate looking edible trifoliate leaves. The growing tips of the stems, although rather fine, are also edible. At the end of the wet season edible blue pea-shaped flowers develop. These are followed by edible winged green pods. If left to mature, the pods produce edible, spherical dry beans. Edibility from roots to tips!

With all these attributes, during the 1970s the plant got a lot of attention from mainstream research agronomists in the hope of developing 'modern types'. However, winged beans stubbornly refused to produce suitable variations and by the end of the following decade had been given up as a bit of a dead loss. So it remains pretty much the same cottage plant as it originally was, rather than one of the modern 'patented models'.

Here, it performs better in acid soils than do *Phaseolus* species beans, about the same as *Vigna* species perhaps, but probably wouldn't be as cold tolerant as snake bean. Waterlogging can cause problems in the wet season, so heavy soils should preferably be hilled. Being a legume, the root system readily nodulates and rhizobial bacteria will provide nitrogen. In less fertile soils the plant will rapidly deplete the ground of nutrients and flower production will decline. I occasionally use manure

'tea' made from poultry manure as a side dressing and keep the plants productive right through the dry season.

The seeds can be very slow and erratic to germinate, some emerging weeks later than others. Their first growth seems quite slow then they just rocket up. A support is needed, 1½ to 2 metres high would be sufficient as they can grow a lot higher and make harvesting more difficult. At the top of the support the plants will sprawl out, but tips can be trimmed off and used. Flowering appears to be photoperiodic and occurs here when daylight periods become less than 12½ hours.

At the end of the wet season when the frequent wet and overcast conditions finish, the plants seem to have trouble with the intense sunlight and drier air. At this stage some shading would be beneficial. But keep in mind that they might grow up onto the shading and be out in the sun again. Keeping their supports to about 1½ metres makes it easier to erect some shade above them.

My plants have always been surprisingly free of pests. Surprising in that whilst being so eminently edible, the pests still tend to leave them alone. They are patrolled by green ants, but while inter-planted snake beans were still badly attacked by bean fly the winged beans remained untouched. If any aphids show up it's never on the winged beans. The situation does change when the surrounding countryside dries out after the wet. There seems to be a build-up of grey-brown

grasshoppers which the poultry won't eat. I assume it's because the grasshoppers themselves, feeding on the rank dry-season vegetation, develop a bitterness from their diet. They will eat anything green, including the bean pods and leaves. With the dwindling numbers of insects, the friarbirds, even if belatedly, start to eat these grasshoppers, but not before there's some damage.

The bean pods have 'wings' similar to the stems of winged yam, *Dioscorea alata*. When small they have a pale green colour and can be used in the same way as green beans. As they age they develop a darker green colour and become rather woody. Once you try cutting them you'll soon realise if the 'green bean use by date' has been passed. Pick them when they are small and a pale green or else leave them until the pods turn black. The dry seeds are round and very hard, needing soaking and prolonged cooking, much the same as other dry beans. Their fat content (about 15 percent) is higher than *Phaseolus* or *Vigna* species beans.

Flowers and leaves can be used raw in salads or in soups, stews or stir-fries. Growing tips of the stems can also be used in soups, stews and stir-fries, but you need a lot if you want volume. The tubers are shaped rather like sweet potatoes and can be cooked similarly. I prefer to use sweet potatoes, however, as the tubers on my winged beans have never been particularly large and don't warrant the destruction of the plants.

MOVING HEAVY LOADS

by John Mount, Woodford, Qld.

Since the time people first began lifting heavy rocks and throwing them onto the luckless heads of large animals, or even worse upon the heads of his unfortunate enemies – he has continually devised better and more practical ways of lifting and moving heavy loads.

I once saw a man small in stature, around 1.5 metres in his socks (we called him Flea!), without any assistance place a large V8 car engine on a wheelbarrow and wheel it quite some distance (for a small wager). This to some may sound a little far-fetched, but when you see it done for the first time it is quite ingenious. He first of all with the help of a lever (a piece of 100 x 100 mm timber) stood the motor upright. He then tipped the wheelbarrow on its side with its lowest edge against the base of the motor. After securing the highest part of the motor to the top side of the barrow with a short piece of rope, he placed the same length of timber between the motor and the wheelbarrow and very slowly, but comfortably, raised the wheelbarrow and

the motor into an upright position.

After positioning the motor's centre of gravity directly over the wheel, he began wheeling (very unsteadily) both barrow and motor for about 20 metres (amidst guffaws and ribaldry from a small crowd of onlookers), until he lost his balance, the motor, and subsequently the bet. (The bet was for 100 metres, though I feel because of the uneven and slippery ground he should have been paid a consolation prize for a great effort.)

Those large statues on Easter Island have puzzled experts for years. Some are over 10 metres in height and it has remained a mystery how they were moved long distances from the quarry to their present sites, especially when trees were in short supply thus ruling out the use of rollers.

When asked how these monoliths were moved, an old native replied that they walked upright to where they are seen today. However, this story may not be that far from the truth. A recent examination of the bases of some of the stat-

ues has shown severely worn edges and it is now thought in some quarters that these stone juggernauts may have been placed upright and 'walked' from the quarry using ropes and levers, probably in a similar fashion to the technique employed by furniture removalists when they 'walk' tall heavy pieces of furniture in confined spaces. Needless to say, keeping those stone colossi upright and in balance would have been interesting to see!

When trying to move heavy loads with a single pulley wheel and rope, don't tie one end of the rope to the load and the pulley wheel to an immovable object and then pull the other end of the rope, as many often do. Halve your effort by securing the pulley directly to the load, anchor one end of the rope to an immovable object like a tree and then pull the other end of the rope.

Remember, large objects or heavy weights can be moved more easily by using one's 'head', rather than using one's back.

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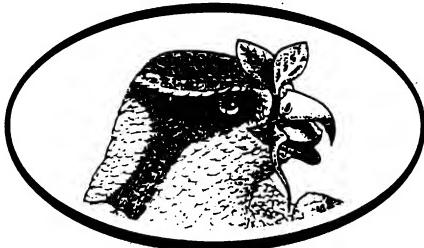
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EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

by Clare Cole, East Hawthorn, Vic.

Congratulations on 25 years of publishing. We have enjoyed reading *Grass Roots* in our household for the past 15 years and always shared it with friends.

My oldest daughter Megan, now 23, never fails to settle in and read the current issue when she comes to visit. Holly, 20 and still at home, also can't resist a browse when GR is delivered. It is very much a part of 'home' for us all. Although we are city dwellers living an urban lifestyle, we do what we can for the environment by recycling everything, composting, and refusing plastic bags and excess packaging. We also buy organic fruit and vegetables. I love my little patch of garden and we try to tread softly and respectfully on mother earth. We consider ourselves 'Grass Roots city folk'.

Your Gumnut Gossip column in issue 125 caught my attention. You asked for past contributors to let you know what they are doing today. In 1982 you published my article entitled 'Educating Children At Home', in the *Grass Roots Family Book*, and I thought about writing to you then with an update but didn't get around to it. Then issue 126 with Sunshine's wonderful recollections of 'Grass Roots Childhood' arrived and here I sit thinking about how to start on this update of our current activities.

In 1982 my daughters Megan and Holly were 4 and 7 years old and we were just beginning a journey of learning and discovery together. Being a home-schooling mum did not stop me from living my own life and pursuing my own interests. In the *Family Book* article the girls were still at primary school level and we were at the beginning of a lifestyle which was built around them learning at home.

Then, in the article, I said: 'The path is not yet clear, and there will be many changes in the years to come, but I can see that my children's lives are much happier and richer than many of their peers, who spend what should be the most exciting and rewarding years of



their lives confined in classrooms, subject to boring, repetitive curriculums, separated from their parents and siblings, and often floundering in a contrived unreal environment.'

You could say that I began with a belief that my children's learning experiences could, and should, be an extension of our home and family life. As I write this I reflect on my projection for the future in 1982 – that 'If you respect and trust children and are willing to give of yourself freely to them, they will learn all they need to become whole, happy, self-respecting human beings who will in turn give of themselves to others.' I feel that for Megan and Holly, this turned out to be the case. This belief was reinforced time and time again as I watched them move through childhood and adolescence.

I trusted that children could learn from a secure home base, at their own pace, without compulsion or experts, and outside institutions. My purpose in offering home as a learning base was not to shield or hide the girls from reality, but to equip and prepare them for it.

Megan completed one term at high school (year 10) when she was 16, prior to gaining entrance to the Melbourne College of Textiles on the strength of her portfolio and her home-schooling background. She was educated at home up until then. Holly decided to go to high

school when she was 12. She completed her VCE in 1995 with a TER of 96.15 and was awarded the VCE Premier's Award and a scholarship. Both successfully made the transition from home to secondary and tertiary institutions and into the workforce.

Megan and Holly's home-schooling background gave them the opportunity to 'learn how to learn' the things they chose. It also provided them with all the skills they needed to move into institutions and the workforce and be responsible for their own lives. Isn't this what education is about? They enjoy life, continue to be creative, and are responsible for their own actions and capable of meeting their study and work objectives. They were not isolated from society or their peers. Wherever our life situation placed us, they always made friends through interest groups and workshops. They were always able to play with 'schooled children' in our neighbourhood outside of school hours.

Parents, I believe, have the right to an informed choice about the range of educational options which are available and so few seem to know that they have the right to teach their children at home.

Clare has written a book about her family's home schooling experience – *How Do Your Children Grow?* Contact her on 03-9532-9500 for details.

ROUND THE MARKET PLACE

We hope you enjoy this feature introducing new products relevant to readers' lifestyles and interests.

BENEFICIAL SEA VEGETABLES

Sea vegetables are a rich source of the minerals needed by humans, animals and plants. They contain between 10 and 20 times the minerals of land vegetables. Sea vegetables also contain many vitamins, alginic acid – a natural cleanser for the intestines, iodine, chlorophyll and fibre. Float leaf is the common name of the native Australian sea vegetable *Macrocystis pyrifera*. It is harvested from the ocean off the southernmost Tasmanian coast by Sheena McDuff, the founder of Southern Ocean Wild Sea Vegetables. SOWSV are a whole food and not a 'kelp tablet' supplement. As well as selling the dried float leaf, SOWSV have produced a small booklet which provides information on the health benefits of sea vegetables and float leaf recipes. They also have a web page: <http://www.tassie.net.au/natural> – Seafood Float leaf is sold in either bulk quantities or in prepacked 25 gram or 50 gram packets.

Contact: Katie Steven (for prepacked orders):
22 Eulinga Rd, Clarinda, Vic 3169. Ph/fax: 03-9544-6354
Sheena McDuff (for bulk orders)
C/O Post Office, Dover, Tas 7117.
Ph: 03-6298-1290, fax: 03-6298-1267, or 03-6298-1197.

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For further information contact: Christopher Darker,
Universality of the Sun, PO Box 231, Palmra, 6157. Ph: 041-8934-607.

THE JUMBO POT

Instead of a hotchpotch collection of pots and pans this is a pot that does it all. Multitopf by Kreck is an integrated food preparation system. With it you are able to cook, boil, steam, preserve and extract. All of the main components are stainless steel so they resist acids and do not absorb smells. The pot has an extra heavy base to provide effective heat distribution all over the surface. The Multitopf unit is made up of: lid with valve and clamps, insert container (7.5 litre), rubber seal, body pot (15 litre), bowl to gather juice (2.5 litre), tripod to hold gathering bowl, extractor tube & clamp, rubber stopper for lid, valve-ball. Multitopf is available for \$310 incl p&p.

Contact: Sharon Nichols,
35 Barbegal Place, Lesmurdie 6076.
Ph: 08-9291-8636.

INK AGAIN

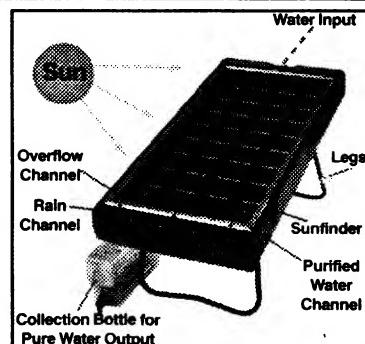
Ink Again is a business dedicated to cost effective, convenient and environmentally friendly ways to meet the needs of people using computer printing technology. Most inkjet cartridges are refillable if certain precautions are taken and the cost and environmental savings are quite considerable. Using a do-it-yourself kit is the most convenient and cheapest way to refill. Ink Again stocks a comprehensive range of kits to suit most popular cartridges. Once you are confident with refilling your own cartridge, you may purchase bulk ink and save even more! Compatible remanufactured inkjet cartridges are also stocked for a large range of popular printers. Ink Again also has a changeover service for laser/ toner cartridges.

Contact: Brett Sandford, Ink Again, PO Box 1851, Geelong 3220.
Ph: 03-5224-1970.

MIRRA STEEL BIRD SCARER

A new means of deterring birds from damaging fruit crops of all varieties, the Mirra Steel Bird Scarer should ideally be put in place before any fruit has been eaten (birds will have developed a taste for the fruit). The bird image scarer is made of heavy Oxford nylon cloth reinforced by fibreglass spars. This sits atop a six metre length of 35 mm water pipe (attached with a cord). The cord is weighted and the weight slides up and down inside the water pipe with the strength of the wind – the windier the day, the more cord is pulled out and the more the bird 'flies'. On low wind days the shape and size of the bird scarer still keeps the fruit protected. One bird scarer per hectare is recommended for maximum effectiveness. Made in South Australia (and used extensively in many vineyards). It is available for \$210 plus \$10 p&p.

Contact Graham Barnes, Mirra Steel Products,
2/6 Queen Street Wodonga 3690. Ph: 02-6056-1933.



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Contact: Handi Home Supplies. Ph: 03-9466-1611, fax: 03-9466-2100.

NATURAL MENOPAUSE RELIEF

Here is an easy-to-digest, natural treatment for easing the symptoms of menopause. Oestrosoy by Nature's Own works on the causes of the various symptoms by helping to maintain the body's natural hormone balance during menopause. It contains the important natural plant oestrogens, wild yam and soy. These natural oestrogens act in the same way as the agents in Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) by 'binding' with oestrogen receptors, but the natural oestrogens do not cause side effects. Oestrosoy are granules which can be sprinkled onto food or into a drink. Available from health food stores and pharmacies for \$17.95 (100 gram size).

Contact: Simone Larmer, PR Works. Ph: 03-9867-6877.

HEALTHY HOMES

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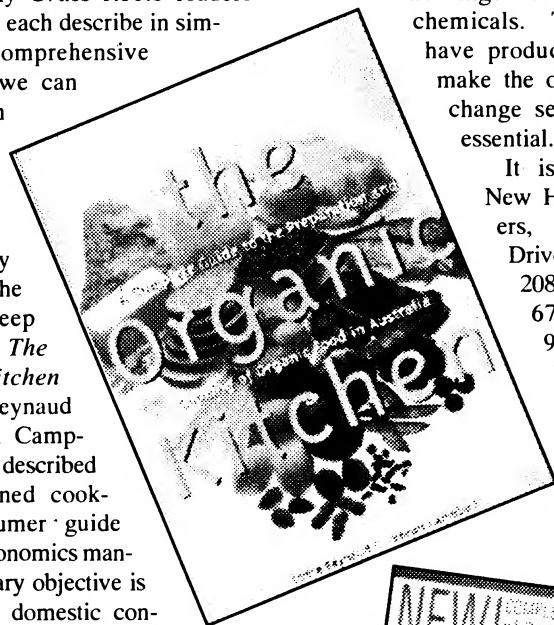
Two recently published books will interest many *Grass Roots* readers because they each describe in simple yet comprehensive terms how we can transform

two important aspects of domestic life – the way we eat and the way we keep clean.

The Organic Kitchen by Lance Reynaud and Duncan Campbell could be described as a combined cookbook, consumer guide and home economics manual. Its primary objective is to show the domestic consumer how to make the transition to an organic lifestyle at home. The authors emphasise that the important aspect of eating organically is the elimination of synthetic chemicals and artificial ingredients from the diet so it caters for both vegetarians and omnivores.

The book provides information on the availability of organic produce, tips on how to eat organically all year round, recipes and advice on adapting your favourite recipes to include organic ingredients. The glossary of organic terms and the directory of producers and retailers of a range of organic products will be particularly useful to many readers.

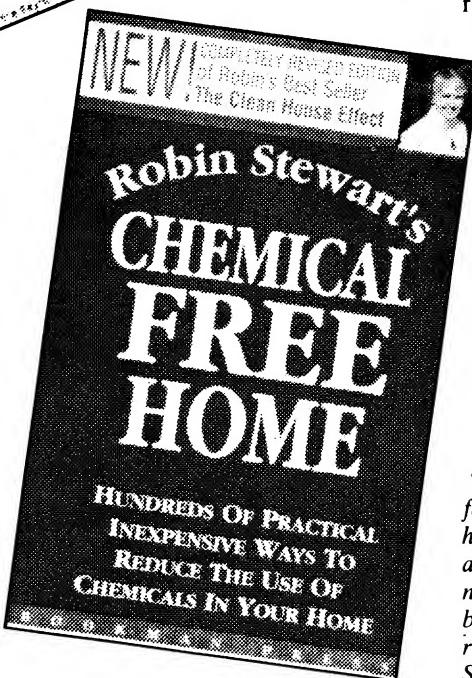
Lance Reynaud is a professional chef with a bent on using ingredients free of synthetic chemicals. Duncan Campbell is a journalist concerned about the lack of choice modern



foods allow people regarding the ingestion of artificial chemicals. Together they have produced a guide to make the organic lifestyle change seem simple yet essential.

It is published by New Holland Publishers, 4/14 Aquatic Drive Frenchs Forest 2086. Ph: 02-9975-6799. Fax: 02-9452-6255. Recommended retail price is \$24.95.

Robin Stewart's *Chemical Free Home*



describes hundreds of practical and inexpensive ways to reduce

the use of chemicals in your home. Effective, cheap and safe alternatives to commercially available hygiene products for domestic and personal use are suggested. Areas addressed are the kitchen, laundry, bathroom, living rooms, bedrooms, basic first aid, personal hygiene, jewellery, cars, insect control, family pets, garden and energy cost reduction. Did you know for example that the simple combination of olive oil and vinegar in equal parts makes an effective timber and leather polish? Or that a light dusting of bicarb soda makes an effective personal deodorant? This book is full of such chemical-free and environmentally-friendly tips for home and personal use.

Robin Stewart began her research for chemical-free alternatives in response to a life-threatening illness resulting from chemical exposure. Her book allows us all to benefit from her experience and knowledge. It is published by Bookman Press, Level 10, 227 Collins Street, Melbourne 3000. Ph: 03-9654-2000. Fax: 03-9654-2290. Recommended retail price is \$14.95.

We have five copies of each of these books to give to ten lucky *GR* readers. Send your favourite tip for an organic diet (to win a copy of '*The Organic Kitchen*') and/or your favourite tip for a chemical-free home (to win a copy of Robin Stewart's '*Chemical-Free Home*'). Winners of all ten books will be selected by Robin Stewart. Your tips must reach *Grass Roots*, PO Box 117, Seymour 3661 by 31 March 1999. The names of the winners will appear in *GR* 133 (June/July).

HOMEMADE MOUSETRAPS

by John Mount, Woodford, Qld.

It was often said that if you invented a new type of super-efficient mousetrap the business world would beat a path to your door. Of course, many would-be mousetrap tycoons flooded the patent office with their ideas, but few ever realised their dreams.

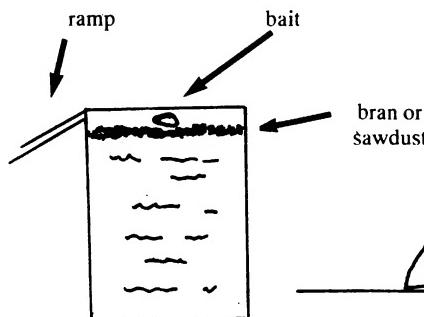
Mousetraps have recently come into their own. They are eco-safe and, like the eternal fly-swatter, forever useful and totally nonpolluting.

Of the many homemade types extant, three have been selected as being the most successful and easiest to construct.

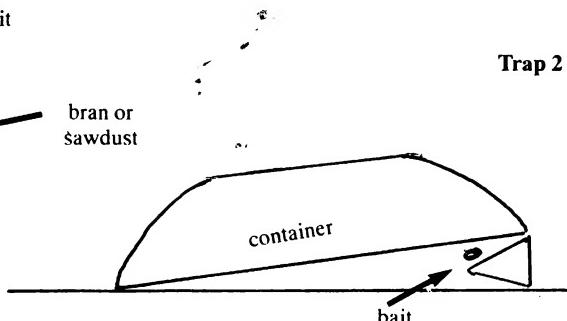
The simplest one is a bucket or drum with its top removed. It is then half or three-quarter filled with water. Upon the surface of the water is strewn bran, chaff, sawdust, or any other permanently dry floating matter that is not repellent to rats or mice. A piece of bread, cheese or other type of bait is placed on top of the floating matter in the centre of the container. A small plank or piece of wood is then placed against the edge of the container to allow the rodent easy access. They climb to the top of the container, see the bait and attempt to walk across the seemingly solid surface to get to it.

The next trap requires a container such as a large bowl, or wide dish placed upside down on a flat piece of board. One edge of the container is suspended on the point of a triangular or T-shaped piece of wood, with the bait suspended on that edge of the triangle that is inside the tin. When the mouse crawls under the container and tries to remove the bait it moves the triangle which causes the tin to drop. A small marble or ball bearing placed under the triangle makes the trap

Trap 1



Trap 2



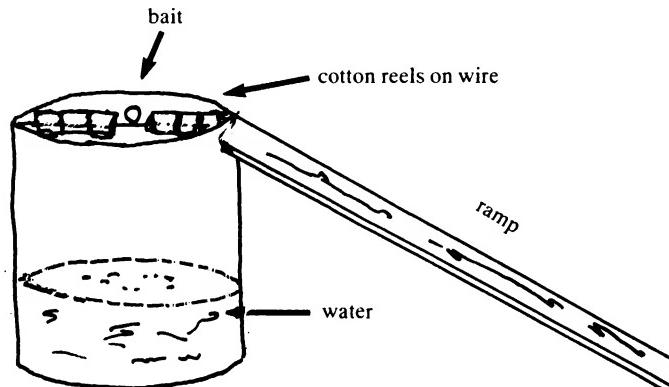
even more sensitive.

The third trap, in common with the first, also requires a bucket-sized container. Nail-sized holes are punched into two opposite sides of the container near the open top. A piece of wire is then strung with six or so cotton reels and placed across the container with the ends secured through the nailholes. The bait is secured halfway across the container on the wire

between the reels and a piece of wood is placed against the container to serve as a ramp. The mice climb the ramp and try to walk across the movable reels to get the bait. If the wire is lightly oiled or greased the reels will move more easily.

The first and last traps have the advantage of always being set regardless of how many mice are caught, while the second does not kill.

Trap 3



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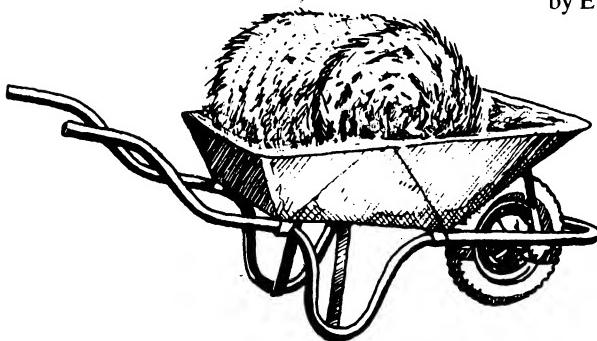
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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WHEELBARROW

by E & Co, Ravenshoe, Qld.



We were the proud new owners of two small four-legged beasties, which we had chosen from a raggle-taggle bunch of bawling calves. Wide-eyed and skittish, the bunch had looked so miserable without their mothers that it was difficult, with inexperienced and emotional eyes, to choose which ones we wanted. At three and four months old, our girls, we felt, would soon grow into reliable lawn mowers.

We locked them in a stall for a few days, so they soon learnt our scent and eagerly ate the meals we provided. Busy mending the fences that had looked so sturdy before our girls' arrival, we paraded our inexperience in weak joins and badly adjusted posts. It looked all right to us. It looked all right to the girls too!

What excitement! What fun! Their release was a joyous occasion. Their escape was well planned. That house in the next paddock looked just like the farmhouse where they had come from. Pity it turned out to be the wrong house. Their visit did afford our neighbour and his dog some entertainment at least. Another mend in the fence.

A few days later the girls discovered that if they jumped the creek, after carefully stepping over the tangle of wire that some fools had left lying about, there was a giant paddock to run around in. The long grass tickled their noses and swished their flanks as they ran. It was great fun being chased, but there was no warm stall to sleep in that night.

Running in long grass in brand-new gumboots soon teaches novices the cunning art of cattle retrieval – let them come to you! However, we still had that lesson to learn, a few tumbles to take and an exhausted night's sleep before our girls were safely behind fences once more.

Much time was then spent on hand-feeding and yet more fencing repairs. Our skill was rapidly improving.

Some time later, and christened after two of my friends, it was time to shift Thecla and Wilma to another paddock. We'd been wheelbarrowing loads of grass twice a day for over a week in a feeble attempt to put off the inevitable. Our land is bisected by a creek, which, without a bridge, looked uninviting as a crossing point. The plan was to allow the girls to graze part of the wide grass verge between fence and road with the assistance of an electric fence. Once this feed was decimated to their satisfaction, we would urge T and W on to the road, across the bridge and down to our driveway. The fact that the road continued past our entrance into an inviting calf runway horrified us immensely! I could just imagine two neat little rumps high-tailing it down to the highway.

T and W had become accustomed to following the barrow, so I suggested leading the way with it laden high with their favourite meal. It was not one of my greater inspirations. In pristine overalls and shiny gumboots we tried to coax two small heifers to leave their familiar territory for a strange new world. They were positive that the electric fence was still there even though they couldn't see it. Even the barrow couldn't tempt them to budge, so I abandoned it at the edge of the bridge. Instinctive age-old animal handlers' tactics then came into play, with lots of arm waving and ho-hoeing (or something to that effect).

Finally they got the message. 'If that's how you want it, we're off!', they said. Although not at a great pace, we were at least moving. They seemed rather interested in the engineering of the bridge.

I was telling the story of how we moved our calves from one paddock to another for the very first time. The expedition was short, but involved travelling along the road, over the bridge and into our main driveway. At the end of the tale, my listener asked this question: 'What was the significance of the wheelbarrow?' So here it is.

Our imagination pictured a semi roaring down the road, so without further deliberations we firmly urged our beauties on. Now Wilma knew where she was going. Without a bat of her long blonde lashes she set off at a brisk pace with Thecla following in her wake. There was no hint of drama on reaching the driveway as Wilma did a swift left turn, trotted promptly into the driveway and happily on into the paddock.

So, what happened to the wheelbarrow? You may well ask. The chap in the four-wheel-drive, who had kindly stopped at the rear of the procession, was no doubt wondering too, if not roaring with laughter. For there I was, pelting along as fast as my gumboots would carry me, a flushed competitor in the wheelbarrow derby! T and W were safely ensconced in their new paddock long before I had cleared the roadway.

Needless to say, our girls are well-proportioned ladies now and have splashed their way across the creek many times since. However, they still follow the passing of any stray wheelbarrow with keen anticipation. I'd say it was in the hope of the contents being favourable, but who knows, a distant memory could be making them smile!



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Recent Releases

On this page we present information about newly published books that we feel will interest readers, with details of prices and publishers. We no longer distribute books for other publishers so if you're interested in buying any of the books described here, please order them through your nearest bookstore.

★ FEATURE TITLE ★

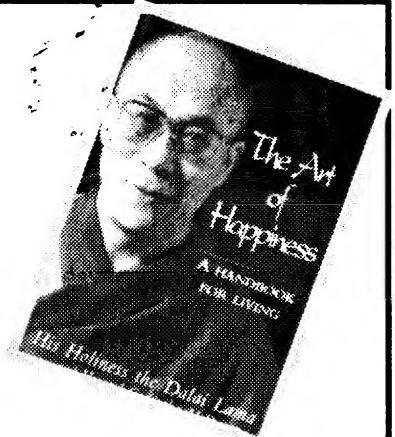
THE ART OF HAPPINESS – His Holiness the Dalai Lama & Howard C Cutler – A Handbook for Living

Howard C Cutler, a western psychiatrist, asks the Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of the Tibetan people, early in their collaboration, 'But is happiness a reasonable goal for most of us? . . . Is it really possible?' and the Dalai Lama answers, 'Yes I believe that happiness can be achieved through training the mind'. This book then describes just how to become happy, according to the Dalai Lama. Through meditations, stories and discussions about Buddhism and psychol-

ogy readers are shown how to overcome depression, anxiety, jealousy etc. The major parts of our lives are examined – relationships, health, work and family – and common problems arising from them are considered. The perspectives of both the Dalai Lama and a western psychiatrist are really insightful. An inspirational and beautiful book for all.

P/b, 322pp, Hodder Headline, Locked Bag 386, Rydalmerle 2116. Ph: 02-9841-2800.

RRP \$24.95.



YOU CAN EARN MONEY FROM WRITING – Gwen Deem

This is a handy guide to motivate and inform beginner writers. It looks at writing styles, publication styles and practical suggestions for getting your work accepted. It includes a comprehensive list of magazines and the types of writing they seek. Send \$5 plus \$1.50 p&p. to Gwen Deem, Lot 1

Hucknell Road, Yerra, Qld 4650.

P/b, 40pp.

MEDITATION IS EASY – Greer Allica

This little pocket-sized book is packed full of inspirational pieces of information and advice about meditation. It doesn't direct the person who picks up this book to any particular form of the practice but rather to a whole range of possibilities. A beautiful small gift to help the path of self-discovery.

P/b, 161pp, Penguin Books, PO Box 257, Ringwood 3134.
Ph: 03-9871-2152. RRP \$7.95.

GARDENER'S COMPANION TO WEEDS

– Suzanne Ermert and Leigh Clapp

In order to control or utilise a weed, it is important to know exactly what you are dealing with. This book has great photos for the easy recognition of over 150 garden weeds and invasive plants. It also describes the habits, methods of dispersal, control methods (chemical and nonchemical) and potential benefits of each (eg. as fertilisers or companion plants).

P/b, 240pp, Lansdowne Publishing, Level 1, 18 Argyle Street, The Rocks 2000. Ph: 02-9240-9222. RRP \$29.95.

CHINESE HEALING FOODS

– Rosa LoSan and Suzanne LeVert

Acupuncture and herbal remedies are the aspects of Chinese medicine we are most familiar with. This book reveals how foods prevent and relieve common health problems. For example, did you know that salty foods like Mussels Steamed in Rice Wine can help facilitate body fluid movement and so relieve premenstrual syndrome? The authors discuss the Yin and Yang of health, the healing properties of food and ways to prepare your kitchen for preparing such foods (necessary tools and ingredients). The bulk of the book describes causes and treatments for a range of common health problems from both a Western and an Eastern perspective and sixty recipes are included which contain the foods to complement the Eastern treatments that have been described.

P/b, 245pp, Simon and Schuster, PO Box 507, East Roseville 2069.
Ph: 02-9415-9924. RRP \$24.95.

FORTUNE TELLING: How to Reveal the Secrets of the Future – Hazel Whitaker

A typical gift book in that it introduces its subject in a simple and easy manner primarily for the uninitiated. It is a colourful book consisting of two sections. The first shows the reader easy-to-follow steps in order to explore the types of fortune telling techniques one can do at home with little practice. The second part describes the types of fortune telling techniques which require consultation with a professional psychic or spiritual teacher. An attractive book which may entice the uninitiated into this fascinating area.

H/B, 78pp, Lansdowne Publishing, Level 1, Argyle Centre, 18 Argyle St, The Rocks 2000. Ph: 02-9240-9222. RRP \$19.95.

NATURAL HORSE CARE - Pat Coleby

This is the sixth edition of a very popular resource for horse owners - completely revised, updated and enlarged in 1998. It is written by animal health expert Pat Coleby who has over fifty years experience in horse care. The book thoroughly describes natural and inexpensive methods of keeping horses healthy with a focus on disease prevention and wellbeing through correct feeding. It includes discussion and advice on soil analysis and improvement, common horse ailments and natural treatments and general care and conditioning. Thorough yet easy to read, this edition will be devoured by amateur and professional horse owners. Save on visits to the vet by having a copy of this information-packed book at hand!

P/b, 142 pp, Grass Roots Publishing, PO Box 117 Seymour 3661. Ph: 03-5792-4000. RRP \$19.95 plus \$3.50 p&p (cheque or money order).

CARING FOR SOIL – Alec Bulford

The publicity for this book says it is a book which bridges the gap between simple primers on soil and university texts. It covers many aspects of information about soil for the benefit of gardeners. These include recognition of soil type, soil deficiencies, soil compositions, ways to nourish soil. A range of helpful charts and appendices accompany the text.

P/b, 102pp, Kangaroo Press/Simon & Schuster, PO Box 507 East Roseville 2069. Ph: 02-9415-9917. RRP \$19.95.

OOPS - In GR 129 the feature title on the Recent Releases page was *Nature's Prozac* by Judith Sachs. Unfortunately, the publisher's contact number was listed incorrectly. The correct telephone number for Simon & Schuster Australia is 02-9415-9924.



DOWN HOME ON THE FARM

by Megg Miller.

'There's been a disaster, can you come down tonight?' she pleaded. 'No, I can't.' I answered, thinking of the heatwave outside and all the farm jobs I had to do. 'But I can pop down after work tomorrow. What's happened?' All sorts of terrible scenarios were flashing through my mind. What awful thing could have happened to elicit such a desperate plea from Suni? 'There's a smell,' she said in a lowered voice, 'I think something's died under the house. It's sickening. I've got to go so can you ring Marcie.' No more explanations there, I figured, the phone call obviously having been made at work. Marcel, Suni's friend, clearly held the key to this mystery. 'Something's under the bathroom Megg, and the smell is awesome . . .' 'Can you have a go at getting the body out?' I asked coaxingly. 'Use the shovel to slip under it. And take a plastic rubbish bag to put the remains in.' It was 42°C outside and the last thing I wanted was a trip down to Melbourne. With a bit of luck Marcel could solve the problem and avert the necessity of the journey.

'I couldn't reach it, Megg. The shovel was too short. It's lying in a tricky, narrow place. You should have seen it, the body's bigger than me . . .' Marcel sounded quite shaken but assured me he was okay. 'It was just the smell. It was terrible.' Racking my brain for easy answers I came up with what I thought was a winner. 'What about your father,' I asked 'Would he be able to help?' 'No, he's not very good at outdoor things, he's worse than me. We never have anything bigger than a cockroach to deal with at home,' Suni's young hero assured me. The smell I gathered, had permeated all rooms of the terrace house and neither air fresheners nor strong aromatics in the oil burner could disguise it. 'Fine,' I promised, 'I'll be down after work tomorrow.'

A bloated monster would be no great deal after the many dead and disgusting things I've had to contend with here over the years. It would certainly be unpleasant, but a manageable situation. I have to confess that when I was closer to Suni's age I would have had to leave solving the dilemma to someone else, so

I could well understand her reluctance to being involved. One particular incident remains distressingly clear. I was newly married and living in an old timber house in a country town. Such houses were never rodent proof and this particular day I discovered a drowned rat floating in the cold bath water. Being summer, water was scarce and the bath was kept for bucketing onto the struggling garden. It was my job after work to dispense the water and the discovery of the rat initiated hysterics. In fact, I was scared entering the room for months to come, never knowing when I might encounter a repulsive rodent. Naturally I wasn't going to insist the children retrieve their critter. 'What!' exclaimed Suni's father when I mentioned the smelly situation to him. 'You're crazy going down there to do it. What's wrong with them? Make them do it!' 'Grrrr,' I responded. 'You men can be so thick, you just don't understand human nature.'

The kids were not exaggerating. The smell when the front door opened was appalling. 'Let's get down to it,' I said, handing over the long-handled shovel and rake from home. Even the time spent in the bedroom changing into overalls necessitated holding my breath. It was bad! Dear Suni changed into her old clothes, so I heaped the garden tools and torch onto her and went out the back to enter the bowels of the house. Faced with the usual array of spider webs and unidentifiable rubbish, I took a deep breath and crawled under. The decking was low and necessitated wriggling along, the torch soon locating at the back what was purportedly a humungous sized body. It may have been larger than life yesterday, but right now it was little more than a pathetic bundle of fur. It was possible to just reach it by rake and drag it to within arms reach. The dubious assortment of rags and rubbish was more offputting than the remains of the possum, so I pushed everything I could into the 'body' bag. The operation was successfully completed.

'You're a treasure darl, the smell is already heaps better. I'm going to take you to dinner,' proclaimed my beaming assistant. Gosh, if that's all there is to earning myself dinner, I'm wasted in the

country. I could make a career servicing and benefitting from people's natural aversion to death and decay.

With high temperatures causing havoc amongst the poultry, I've had some death and decay here to get rid of. It's been unbelievable, more than a week of temperatures exceeding 38°C, several days in fact reaching 42-3°C. Poultry can cope with one or two days of high temperatures, but then they become susceptible to heatstroke. Anything aged or suffering a low grade infection is at risk, but even some of the young healthy stock just keeled over. Not being on site I can't administer extra TLC and water. The losses weren't great but included a favourite old show turkey and one of the pet quails.

Right at the beginning of this heatwave I discovered the dam was low. Admittedly, I had been watering the garden, though not over-generously. Increased evaporation had clearly taken its toll, but also the thirsty depredation of the landlord's sheep added to the higher than usual usage. When there is no paddock run-off from heavy rain the dam is filled by pumping water up from the bore. The flow is little more than a trickle, albeit a continuous one, and all I'm managing to do at the moment is maintain the existing dam level. I've been very grateful for the bore, without it there would be a catastrophe. The water shortage and accompanying lack of pressure in the pipes has resulted in a return to carrying buckets, an activity that nearly killed me the first few days. Long forgotten muscles limbered up and now it's only my feet that are complaining. Pity help the birds if they tip a bucket or drinker over.

The garden, alas, has had to be let go. I'd swear I was writing almost the same words this time last year, when it was equally as dry. By the end of the day my feet simply cannot be cajoled into making more trips, so at most the plants get to savour just a couple of buckets of water. A few bits and pieces are managing to survive, but the lawn is browning off and well established shrubs and bushes look obviously stressed. Even the wash-up water and shower run-off are being utilised. What is annoying is that the ants are working

—PENPALS—

frantically and grey clouds pass over but they dump their contents elsewhere. We've had one little rain but mostly a half-dozen large drops fall and then it blows over.

Hot days and nights bring the danger of snakes, and the thought crossed my mind one evening recently how quiet they had been, not one reptile encountered to date. This is remarkable as the damp soil around the bore where the buckets are filled seems an ideal spot for hot thirsty snakes. Not an hour after thanking my lucky stars for their absence, I heard a loud 'hah-hah' as I walked along the path to the back door. Switching on the torch, a cheeky tiger was caught in its beam, standing up and spitting out obscenities. It was comical, a twerp of a snake about half a metre long creating a drama. 'Nick off,' I muttered. The snakes that usually inhabit this place are twice as long and do little to draw unwanted attention to themselves. I keep a sharpish lookout at night now and don't take unnecessary risks, but it's really relaxing to walk around without the ever-present fear of being bitten.

The heatwave has sent hens broody everywhere. At one stage it was difficult to find eggs for the table, most of the nests being monopolised by determined broodies. After a couple of hens turned up with small broods of chickens, I thought it was time to be pro-active. Any hen on the nest at night now can expect to find herself tossed into a coop with other irritable half-clucky hens. There were seven behind bars earlier in the week and the same number not long released. The incubator is silent, turned off a couple of weeks back when I considered the months of work ahead feeding and watering the existing hatchlings. If more chicks were needed from some of the rarer breeds then the willing broodies could earn their keep.

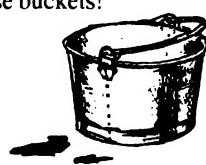
The best broody is always a topic for discussion amongst poultry keepers and I've decided, yet again, nothing equals the ability of a Malay Game hen. They're very ugly, fierce looking birds, but so slow and gentle with their young. It's awful watching highly strung hens rush their chicks around, you can guarantee a couple of the littlies will die of exhaustion on the very hot days. Not so with the Malay, she has the sense to sit and rest, taking the chicks out for a scratch when it's cooler. For years the Indian Game were my favourite breed,

the hens being very determined, protective broodies. However, they become quite hostile when the chicks hatch and occasionally even turn on them, pecking viciously and even killing them. This hasn't been uncommon when a couple of broodies have been sitting in the same shed. I found the Indians had injured a little chick recently and popped it under a Malay for warmth until I had finished feeding. This hen was making encouraging noises to the chick when I returned and indicated with a couple of sharp pecks that I'd forfeited ownership.

Often I notice Malay hens chicknapping each other's young. One disappointed hen took over a clutch after they had been weaned by their mother at around six weeks, these sooks allowing the hen to mollycoddle them until they were one-third grown. People say the Silkie and the Pekin bantam are fantastic broodies, but I'm going to stick to my marvellous Malay.

Both the pig and sheep have been looking hot and bothered and there's scarcely been garden weeds to cheer them up. I bring scraps home from the office for the pig, who really enjoys them. Who wouldn't, lots of exotic overripe fruit or stale cakes and biscuits, much more interesting food than I provide. Mind you, she enjoyed the very best earlier this week when I mistakenly fed her the day's collection of fresh eggs instead of the aged lot I foolishly placed on the same shelf. I can't understand how I made such a mistake. With so few hens laying, I needed those eggs. The pig lives very well, thank you!

Life, by necessity will be quiet until the hot weather passes. Even the dog is feeling it and can't be bothered with guarding activities during the day, instead lying prostrate under the office in a stupor. I'm fortunate Suni has just sent home a large bag of books. Rearranging the bookshelves is a perfect job for summer weekends, and probably a time for consuming one as I'm not going to be able to resist a little peek. Pity chocolate melts in the heat or I could make the task really decadent. On the other hand, what are sticky fingerprints between friends? There needs to be a rewards for carrying all those buckets!



Central Coast mum, one child, would like to hear from females/mums for friendship. Our interests include music, yoga, vegetarianism, a positive way of life. I will answer all replies.

**Mum,
PO Box 105, ENTRANCE 2261.**

I am a 25 year old single mum. My interests are nights out, pictures, camping, children, and I really love cooking. I would like to correspond with males of similar age and interests.

**Louise Poole,
C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.**

Are you 50 something, enjoy gardening, hand-crafts, drawing, music, reading, discovering Australia and writing letters? I would love to hear from you!

**Liz,
C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.**

46 years of age, mother of young adolescent, European background; I enjoy reading nonfiction, writing, walking, pushbike riding, wilderness gardening. I love nature, simplicity, a pure environment, sharing times with my son and with honest, caring people. I have an awareness of God in my life, and a desire to hear from similar-minded people, preferably close to my own age.

**Michele Blanche,
PO Box 216, NUNDAH 4012.**

I'm a 21 year old girl and live on four acres. I grow my own vegetables/herbs. I have a menagerie of small animals. I would love penpals of any age and will answer all letters.

**Melissa,
34-38 Lyon Drive, GREENBANK 4124.**

I am a 24 year old single mother. My interests are my children, writing letters, cooking, reading, listening to most music and going out having a good time. I will answer all letters.

**Joanne,
363 Centenary St, ALBURY 2640.**

My name is Bonnie, I am turning 10. I like reading, writing and music. I play the piano and recorder. I would like a penpal around my age.

**Bonnie Red,
C/- GR, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.**

Hi my name is Jade, I'm 10 years old and in grade 4. My hobbies are riding horses, swimming, writing, reading and going shopping for clothes. I'm looking for a penpal aged between 10-13 and a girl. I'll write back to all my letters.

**Jade,
C/- GR, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.**

Hi! My name is Daniel aged 10. I would prefer a boy aged 9-11. My hobbies are going to the beach, playing soccer and fishing. I have 2 mice, 2 guinea pigs etc. If you like this letter please write to.

**Daniel,
C/- GR, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.**

Poetry

BREATHE

*Country gent, 46, seeks
Rural lady for ideal idyll.
Damper in wine moonlight
See the stars with me,
Breathe pesticide free,
I believe, you see.*

Colette Corr

A SYDNEY HEATWAVE

*The dry wind breathes
like an asthmatic

Sun's polished face reflects
itself off the bitumen

I wipe sweat from my eyelids
and the weedy pong of armpits

The afternoon sets
like dried mud

The last cool change
three weeks ago

Down at the quay
ferries jostling

Sunlight x-rays
a leaf*

Jules Leigh Koch

AUSTRALIAN SILENCE

*Silence over many miles
a harmony
survival silence
rising
after struggle
and fighting
a dying,
a surfacing,
and then a renewing.*

*Silence palpable
presence of
survival compromise
one tree
a narrow creek,
a kangaroo
and a blackbird crying,
a lone lizard scuttling down a track,
tangibles in the quietness of miles.*

*The silence of the sparse bush
and indifferent sky
lonely evidence
of something alive there,
more subtle than green forest,
crashing waterfalls,
dense jungles
or the constant sound of creatures
who cry aloud in watery glades*

*Silence over many miles
strange harmony
of muted colours,
a tough enduring of
resistant spirits,
rising in peace
that is hard to win
but comes with pressing on
a kind of tolerance.*

Irene Playford



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HOW TO ADVERTISE

Use the form provided below, or a separate sheet of paper, to print your advertisement clearly, **not in block capitals**, including correct punctuation. If you have more than one ad please print each one on a separate page. Remember to include an address or phone number in your advertisement. Count the number of words and multiply by 80 cents per word (phone number counted as one word) to work out the total cost of your advertisement. Send with payment to Grass Roots, PO Box 117, Seymour 3661, before the deadline and we'll include your advertisement in the next issue of Grass Roots. **Deadline for GR 132 is 28th February, 1999.** Please do not fax ads.

Sender's Name For issues no/s
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Cost for advertisements is 80c per word

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PROPERTY FOR SALE

NEW SOUTH WALES

BEGA VALLEY, 40 ac perm crk frontage, flora & fauna reserve on rear bndry, on school bus route, 10 mins to village, 35 mins to coast. \$30,000. Ph: 03-5158-7238.

BOMBALA NSW, f/holding building & land. Presently used as a studio & retail shop. Could be a bed sitter or home. Suit artist who can teach. Ideal one person income. Selling art supplies, s/h books, bric a brac, plants. Interesting shop. \$85,000 WIWO incl stock. Shadowhouse at the rear. Ph: 02 6148 2602.

DEUA NATIONAL PARK, 15 mins Moruya, 20 mins beach, 3 b/r stone, solar house on 60 ac, approx 10 ac fenced river flats, some r/forest. School bus, phone, bass fishing, estab orchard. Ideal market garden, horses, base for wilderness venture. \$180,000. Ph: 02-4474-3091.

ORGANIC ACRES (3) w/w/ender, mudbrick/cypress pine. Rural town 45 mins, Wagga, NSW.

Ideal soil for almonds. \$40,000. Ph: 03- 5332-8009.
MID NORTH COAST, 48 ha bush retreat, perm
crk, well timbered, several home sites, 19 km to
town, 40 mins to coast. Valued \$77,000 reduced
to \$63,000. Ph: 02-6568-8214

HOLBROOK SHIRE, 1500 ac, f/hold virgin coun-
try. \$100,000 ONO. Ph: Steve, 02-6036-8164.

NAMBUPCA VALLEY. Executive 4 b/r BV home

49 sq on 5 ac, 360' views. Rural lifestyle only 10 mins to beach. Fully fenced. Town water, Solahart. Red cedar windows, Cathedral ceilings, fan-forced s/c fire, dishwasher, microwave. Timber kitchen with WIP, ducted vacuum, wide verandahs, 4 car garage and workshop. \$249,000. Ph: 02-6568-2356.

NAMBUPPA VALLEY, 5 cleared ac, town water avail, power, ph, fenced. Picturesque rural setting and only 10 mins to Nambucca & beaches. \$58,000. Ph: 02-6568-2356.

MOONAN FLAT, NEAR SCONE. 1½ ac (0.76 ha) in sml village. Fenced, power on block, shed. \$17,000 Ph: 02-4283-3382

ONE HUNDRED ACRES, 2½ hrs Sydney, 1 hr Canberra, ½ hr Goulburn. Partly cleared, 2 fenced paddocks + several yards. Three b/r, 4 yr old, cypress house with BIR & en suite. Northerly aspect, verandah 3 sides, 9 ft ceilings, fully insulated, lge s/c/stove, 6 m x 9 m shed, inground concrete water tank, spring-fed dam, irrigated vegie patch, f/trees, greenhouse, chook yards etc. Electricity connected + gas delivered, school bus at gate. Wildlife in abundance. \$190,000 ONO. Ph: 02-4849-4690 for info & photos or email: dbs@interact.net.au

COOMA/SNOWY MOUNTAINS: 3 b/r house on 1/2 ac, fully fenced, shed/garage, picturesque location. Walk to shops, facilities, school bus at gate, 90% renovated, further potential, 1 1/2 hrs to Canberra, coast, ski resorts. Urgent sale. \$59,000
ONO Ph: 02-6452-6356.

TRANQUIL SETTING IN QUIET VALLEY. Area popular with artists, 1700 ac, fenced for goats/sheep, bounded on one side by perm crk, watered by spring dams. Three b/house, shearing/machinery shed, natural bushland area, ph/elec connected, 200 km Sydney. \$500,000. WIWO ONO. Ph: 02-6379-7250.

FAR SOUTH COAST, 50 mins Merimbula, 1½ hrs Jindabyne. Luxury mountain mud brick cottage, 1 b/r, lge rustic kitchen & living area, bathroom, laundry. Power, ph. Set in 30 ac forest, interspersed with walking tracks. Lots more features. \$135,000. Ph: agent, 02-6458-3433.

EMMAVILLE, NEW ENGLAND, 3 b/r home, edge of town, wood heater, verandahs, 4 car Colorbond garage, 7 ac, huge dam + well. Walk to school, shops, pubs, hospital, pool. Good outlook to bush. \$65,000 OONO. Ph: 02-6736-3877 or 6734-7479.

HEAVEN FOR SALE – Bellingen. Our 3 ac organic property, known as 'Heaven', with sweeping views, abundant birdlife & walk to safe swimming, is situated on tarred rd close to public & Steiner schools & preschool. Peaceful location with loving families as neighbours, 'Heaven' boasts 120 food trees incl citrus, nuts, avocados, starfruits, etc, dual water system utilising r/water, crystal clear mtn stream, covered vegetable patch, chook house, greenhouse & more. Our huge 5 b/r house, all with built-ins, boasts 3 bathrooms, an enormous kitchen with gas & wood stoves & walk-in pantry, 2 lounge rooms, one sunken with lge fireplace, huge rumpus or possible 6th & 7th b/rs, 2 phone lines, 2 car garage & work area. Heaven awaits! \$195,000. For details ph: 02-6655-8633.

UNIQUE 1½ ac alluvial soil, surrounded by 1000 ac rich green hills incl r/forest. Complete with 3 b/r homestead, all mod cons, lge entertainment areas, 8 mins to village with school, doctor, etc, 45 mins to Kemppsey \$89 500 Ph: 02-6567-2080

OPEN ONE HECTARE BLOCK in broadacre strata, 30 mins to Lismore, 60 to beaches, nat pks. \$29,500 Ph: 02-6633-7022

COSY IMMACULATE BRICK/TIMBER HOME, 3 b/r, solar power, 1 ha strata, park-like gardens, pool. Lismore 30 mins, 60 mins nat pks, beaches. \$99,000. Ph: 02-6633-7022.

TARA: two 32' x 16' cypress cabins, 30 ac, mains + solar power, air conditioner, dam, shadehouses, septic, school bus. Only 3 km gravel road, suit retirees or family. POA. Ph: 07-4665-3106.

FOOTHILLS OF THE SNOWY MOUNTAINS, only 1½ hrs from Wagga Wagga. Ideal for semi-retired couple, sml apple orchard on 80 ac farm with perm water from natural spring-fed dam, irrigation licence, 4 b/r + s/out. Fibro home with wood heating, lge sheds and many more extras unable to mention. \$250 000 O.N.O. Ph: 02-6949-2019

GRASSIFIEDS

PROPERTY FOR SALE

NEW SOUTH WALES

WANTED, SMALL ABODE IN FOREST, to rent or buy, maximum 40 km radius from Lismore. Need peace & quiet & have limited funds. Ph: Lyn, 02-6629-8137.

MID NORTH COAST, 100 ac with comfortable dwelling, all amenities, perm crk, spectacular mtn views & sunsets, carrying 35 head of cattle, 45 mins west of Kempsey. \$89,000. Ph: 02-4971-2193.

BORDER RANGES, 115 ac, 3 b/r modern home + studio, northern aspect, lge sheds, 3-phase power, crk frontage, 3 dams, cattle crush, fully fenced, mtn views, 20 mins Killarney shops, schools, hospital. Private sale. Ph/fax: 07-4666-5150 AH.

PRISTINE RIVER FRONTAGE land & dwelling, 45 mins inland from Bodalla, 5 hrs south of Sydney. Half share of 52 forested ac. Own private comfortable dwelling. \$88,000. Ph: 02-4473-7233.

FAR NORTH COAST, NIMBIN, 8 fertile ac, 2 b/r home with orchard. Elevated, north facing position, magnif views, perm spring-fed dam with pump. \$140,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6689-1701.

NYMBOIDA, NORTHERN NSW, 26 ac, 10 x 5.2 cabin with 2 lofts, 1 km from river, 80% cleared, fully fenced with internal paddock, solar power. \$55,000. Ph: Kev, 02-9651-1391.

MORUYA, SEVEN ACRES on Deua River, 15 mins from town. Shed, solar power, c/van, ph, school bus. \$95,000. Ph: 02-4474-2552.

FAR NORTH COAST (Ettrick), 10 km to Kyogle. One hr to beach, 1 ha on perm crk, but flood-free. Dwelling with mains power, ph & tank. \$40,000 ONO. Ph: 08-8981-1238.

EUNGAI CREEK, private 1/4 ac hand-built 3 b/r, octagonal Tudor house, 20 mins Grassy Heads Beach. Borders crown land, cabin & workshop. \$85,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6569-9412.

QUEENSLAND

GIN GIN TWENTY MINUTES, Bundaberg & coast 1 hr, 2 b/r cabin with wide verandahs, a gardener's paradise. Includes 25 irrigated picturesquely ac, fish ponds, rose gardens, thousands of ornamentals in park-like setting & a smal golf course. Suit self-suff, 95 mangos, 60 mixed stone fruit, over 50 assorted citrus & 100 other tropical fruit & nut trees. With income potential - vegie garden & chook pens. Fenced into 3 paddocks, 4 fish stocked dams. Yards, stable & sheds, Power & ph connected, school bus & mail to door. \$134,900. Ph: 07-4157-6529.

BEAUTIFUL MACLEAY ISLAND, fully furnished 2 b/r cottage comprising queen size bed, twin wardrobes, then single bed, lowboy party cupboard. Kitchen: Fisher & Paykel freezer, Westinghouse refrigerator, gas stove, dresser, microwave oven, bread making machine. Then: 4 recliner chairs, TV, video cabinet, CD player, G coder sound unit, reverse cycle air conditioner. Laundry: Fisher & Paykel washing machine, dryer, linen cupboard, chest of drawers. Front latticed patio, all-weather green carpet, table & chairs, bar fridge, bamboo blinds, 2 garages, lawnmower, garden shed, shadehouse, town, tank and bore water. Nothing to buy. Gold Coast climate. Walk-in-walk-out. Full price \$55,000. Please ph: 07-3206-9394.

HEADLINES: GR 132 – FEBRUARY 28TH
GR133 – APRIL 30TH

QUEENSLAND – BAFFLE CREEK 20 ac & 60 ac, good soil near river. Best offer. Ph: 0412-203-134.

PATTERSON, 75 ac, 30 mins south of Maryborough Qld. enclosed c/van with annexe. Two poly water tanks. Fully fenced with new front fence & gate. Seasonal crk, school bus at front gate. Beautiful bushland setting with walking tracks t/out. See kangaroos, possums & emu. Great place to get away. Buy now & avoid 10% GST. Only \$59,900. Ph: 07-4123-6713.

ELEVEN MAGICAL ACRES, minutes from Noosa shops/beaches, private, r/forest/crk, abundant water, garden. Lovingly crafted earthbrick cottage. Unique investment, prestige area, future subdivision. \$252,000. Ph: Tara, 07-5449-1186. tandem@ozemail.com.au

UNIQUE PRIVATE ORGANIC retreat, 85 ac, income potential, 350 fruit, nut and neem trees. Two dwellings, spring-fed dam. No neighbours. Noosa, Rainbow Beach, one hr. \$165,000. Ph: owners, 07-5483-1450.

DRASTICALLY REDUCED: Own your own piece of bush paradise for a fraction of original price. We've moved interstate & must sell! 'Pine Creek', 40 mins Texas Qld, 100 ac organic property in chemical-free area. Fully-fenced, perm crk, spring-fed dam. Ironbark, cypress pine, fossicking & wildlife. Fenced homesite, 1 1/2 ac, power/ph avail. School bus at gate. Ideal for olives/grapes. Good grazing cattle/horses. Idyllic family retreat for only \$29,500. Ph: 07-3409-4050.

OPPORTUNITY FOR OWN HEALTH FARM – log cabins, café etc. Gold Coast Hinterland International Resort Kooralbyn. Sky diving, golf, tennis, polo etc, 22 ac corner, magnif views above lookout, undulating, lightly timbered, dam/silver perch, rockpool etc. Residence, town water, school bus, International School. \$179,000 ONO. Also 8 ac adj \$59,000 ONO. Ph: 07-5544-6259.

COOYAR, approx 60 km to Kingaroy and Toowoomba, 5 ac, 2 dams, part cleared, View to mtns, close to nat pk, ph & power avail. \$22,000 ONO. Ph: 08-9274-0539 (WA).

RELOCATED, RENOVATED, ELEVATED house, 1 ac f/hold, 360 ac commonland, Kookaburra Park Eco-Village Gin Gin. Two b/r + sleepout, lounge, eat-in kitchen opening onto lge verandah, 2 toilet/bathrooms, one downstairs in laundry. Concreted under, legally possible to enclose. Septic, ph, power, sealed rds. Abundant utility water supplied, 2 r/water tanks (9000 gal) household use. Colorbond RAD 9 m x 6 m garage/workshop. Large shadehouse, chook house, many gum trees, estab gardens, birdlife, kangaroos, etc. \$89,000. Ph: 07-4157-2041.

INNISFAIL: THIRTEEN ACRES of native timber trees, shed, ph, power, water, shower, crk, 10 km to town & beaches. \$105,000. Ph: 07-4065-4612.

Make Your editor smile –
Punctuate when writing ads for
Grass Roots Grassifieds

MILLMERRAN, DARLING DOWNS, 700 ac, 2 deeds, fully fenced, dams, timbered. Power and ph avail. Bargain at \$85,000 ONO. Ph: 07-5426-7799.

COOBERRIE, CAPRICORN COAST area, 25 ac block, 3 b/r brick lowset home, landscaped garden, r/water, 2000 GPH bore, fully fenced. Bitumen rd, 10 mins to Yeppoon. Very private bushland setting. \$140,000. Ph: 07-4938-3062.

GIN GIN, 25 ac, 1 b/r home, verandahs, aircon, ph, power, ex/views. Established irrigated gardens, f/trees, 50,000 gal total water in 6 tanks, 2 dams with firefighters, good timber, fenced, \$115,000 ONO. Ph/fax: 07-4157-6518.

WILDERNESS AREA, 160 ac f/hold, native hardwood forest, 45 mins west Maryborough, 100 km to Fraser Island, 10 mins walk to Mt Walsh Nat Pk. Clean crk frontage, abundant wildlife (koalas), all-weather rd access. \$70,000. Ph: 07-4129-9118, fax: 07-4129-9018.

FORCED SALE – PARTNERSHIP, due to good health (beat cancer). Maleny 6 km, 32 ac, hidden pristine valley, fertile soil, pure water, views to Brisbane. Unique solar/Feng Shui designed home. High potential: retreat, healing centre, environmental park, two more home sites etc. Buy half now (partnership) \$175,000, rest within 2 years. Free or cheap rent. Open to negotiations. Win/win. Ph: 07-5494-9860.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

BRAMFIELD, 12 km from Elliston – a coastal town with good fishing. Bramfield is a community-minded village with a school bus service. Spacious 2 b/r solid stone cottage in good condition. Recent improvements added. Full of old-world charm. Proven income from fruit orchard. On 1 1/2 ac with 3 separate titles. Sale due to recent marriage. Good water, good soil. One well, one bore. \$59,950. Enquiries: PO Box 65, ELLISTON, SA 5670. Ph: 08-8682-1413.

VICTORIA

NORTH-EAST VICTORIA, 25 mins Albury - Wodonga, 7 yr old, passive solar house, cathedral ceilings t/out, 3-4 b/rs. Elevated position, magnif views to Mt Bogong & Lake Hume, 18 ac, pasture, estab gardens, Land for Wildlife status. \$178,000. Ph: 02-6026-4260.

ONE ACRE HIDEAWAY, nat forest, semi-completed 1 b/r dwelling. Beautiful spot, plenty wildlife & water, 30 km major town – Brimboal via Casterton. \$8500. Ph: 03-5581-1427.

LIFESTYLE & INCOME, 19 ha, fully producing cherry orchard offering minimum 10% return for 6 weeks work p/a. Bush setting 18 km west of Wangaratta with broad westerly views. Adjoins nat pk. Plenty of ideal home sites, 2500 cherry trees watered by microjet system supplied by 2 lge dams. \$99,900, or, walk-in-walk-out with all machinery and equipment \$117,000. Ph: 03-5722-4972 for details.

WEDDERBURN, CALDER HIGHWAY, NW Melbourne (2.5 hrs), Bendigo 45 mins. Neat 3 b/r home, air con/heat and o/fire, c/port, excel shedding, perfect position, 5 mins or less walk to all facilities. Private backyard, lge block. \$58,000. Ph: 03-5442-8615.

GRASSIFIEDS

PROPERTY FOR SALE VICTORIA

TYABB, MORNINGTON PENINSULA, Vic: Beautiful timber 2 b/r cottage, timber floors, o/fires, gas, water tanks, fruit & native trees, organic vegie garden, 1/4 ac. Contact ph: 03-5977-3717.

TASMANIA

TASMANIA – UPPER ESK, house on 3½ ac, \$39,000 ONO. Ph: owners, 03-6377-1157 or 6327-4911.

HUON VALLEY, 4 bed home, o/fires, w/heating, lovely garden, 18 ac pasture & bush, extensive w/shops, f/trees, g/house, animal pens, 5000 gal water, sml livestock incl if required, 5 mins village, 2 mins water. \$86,000. Video avail \$10. Ph: 03-6297-1991.

TWENTY KILOMETRES FROM STANLEY, 27 ac, 3 b/r, 2 storey house, open plan living. Built in natural amphitheatre. Solar and wind generator, 5600 gal tank, new spring-fed dam, glass hot-house, vegie garden. Too much to list. \$60,000. Ph: 03-6456-1421.

NORTH COAST, 1 seaside ac, 57 km sealed rd Launceston, yet so quiet, so private. Unspoiled beach 300 m, boat ramp 400 m, boardriding 3 km, golf course next door. Quarter-ac clearing in natural bush, u/ground power, box, ph, tank, 2 sheds, Tam O'Shanter Bay. Now unequalled value – \$6000 below cost – \$16,900 ONO. Ph/fax: 03-6382-6100.

FOREST PARADISE, private rd to secluded timber home. Nestled between Sugar Loaf – Saddle Back and Quamby Bluff. Looking onto the Great Western Tiers. 52 ac, 25 ac fenced for venison/emu, 27 ac of wonderful forest. Dams, rivers, springs, rivulets, spectacular wildlife, abundant trout streams, sml orchard, 8 solar panels, 6 tonne battery storage capacity, wired for 240V/12V generator. Second home stone house requires renovations. Beautiful Deloraine 20 km, close to Great Lakes, 40 mins from Launceston/Devonport. \$148,000. Ph: 02-9939-7205.

COMMUNITIES/SHARES

WANTED: CHRISTIAN SHAREHOLDERS, who are interested in buying some property around the area of SE Qld to nth NSW. To help set up a part-time to full-time permaculture commune with the aim to be a totally self-sufficient, sharing & caring commune. Contact David, 07-3869-2175.

FAR NORTH COAST, 3.5 km NW Lismore. Beautiful solid spacious home, wide verandahs, elevated position, extensive views, 4 ac, u/house garage & workshop. Organic gardens, f/trees, complete privacy. Power, ph, cabin, u/cover c/van. Secure strata development. School buses. \$159,000. Ph: 02-6633-7033.

LOTUS PERMACULTURE VILLAGE: Share sale now \$14,000. For a prospectus: C/- 7/13, Campbell Ave, PADDINGTON, NSW 2021.

NAMBUCCA VALLEY – 2 b/r home on 1200 ac, 1/2 share. Nearby spring-fed crk, swimming holes, f/trees, native forest. \$45,000 ONO. Ph: 02-4782-5278.

PLACING AN AD?
See page 74 for details

NAMBUCCA HEADS 1/2 hour, affordable land, 1200 ac. Backs onto state forest, 1/2 share in mostly native forest, 20 ac, crk flats, 2 ac relatively level house site, cabin, ph, 4000 gal r/w/tanks, dam, f/trees, all year crk, swimming holes. Was \$45,000 now \$33,000 ONO. Ph: John, 02-9999-1006 or Jen 02-6564-4118.

BUSINESSES FOR SALE

GALLERY/TEA HOUSE, residence and 3 star accom in the village of Yanakie, 5 km from Wilsons Promontory Nat Pk, Victoria. Estab 8 years & first time offered, with a sound proven & growing income (section 52 available), to suit artistic folk, with a love of this clean & untouched part of the world. School bus passes door, Foster/Fish Creek 15 mins away. \$295,000 ONO + SAV. Ph: 03-5687-1347.

HEALTH FOOD STORE AND RENTAL OFFICES in clean, green Tasmania, 20 years estab respected business in beautiful community. Suit natural therapist/practitioner couple. Freehold price incl inventory, equipment, shop fittings. \$120,000 ONO. Ph 03-6362-2515.

FOR RENT/ CARETAKER WANTED

PERSON(S) TO SHARE 30 ac Lower Hunter bush block. Vegetarian, n/s preferred. Visitors welcome. Ph: 02-4938-2036.

HANDYPERSON/COUPLE, needed for hobby farm. No salary, free accom, electricity. Tasmania. Ph: 03-6239-0550.

EXPERIENCE BEFORE BUYING your own piece of dirt. 'A' cottage or log cabin or 4 berth c/van, cheap rent, grape and fruit growing area. South Queensland, solar powered, self-suff farm, great views, small community. Ph: 07-4684-5124 evenings or email – danny@halenet.com.au

FARMHOUSE FOR RENT, close to town & river. Suit single male or female or pensioner couple. New diesel motor, generator. \$80 pw. Write: PO Box 60, YARWUN, 4694 QLD. Ph: 07-4973-6541.

ARE YOU FED UP? Do you want a different but healthy lifestyle Yes! Yes! Why not rent our cottage on the Yowah Opal fields? Yowah has a lovely new school, friendly community and great social life. Ph, elec & free hot artesian water on tap. Totally self-contained. Perm tenants only. \$60 pw. Ph: 08-8979-5962

NEW ENGLAND, 2 b/r cottage, own yard, sheds & vegie patch, elec, ph, s/c/heater, near homestead. Suit retired couple. \$60 pw, + feed dogs & chooks 1 or 2 days per week. Town 22 km. Cold winters, mild summers. Please reply in writing: 'Cottage', PO Box 28, WALCHA 2354.

Don't forget the deadline if wishing to advertise in Grass Roots

SEYMOUR DISTRICT FARM, 6-12 months from February. \$150 pw. Call Candi: 03-5796-9366.

ONE PERSON TO CARETAKE 5 ac in Whitsunday QLD, in exchange for self-contained accom. Must have vehicle. Ph: 07-4947-5786.

CARETAKER REQUIRED for approx 3 months from April '99 to care for our home & animals. Lovely Queenslander on 6 ac at base of Mt Tambourine, Qld. Write: JP (GR131), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

PROPERTY WANTED

HOUSE WANTED. Run-down or part built. NE Vic or 1 hr Adelaide. Below \$55,000. Ph: 08-8536-4415, 7-10pm.

WANTED, LAND IN GRAFTON/Armidale/Tenterfield triangle, perm clean crk, between 20-100 ac, perhaps dwelling. Ph: 02-4739-8280.

WANTED TO RENT/ CARETAKE

DESPERATELY NEEDED, house in good repair, out of town, school travelling distance Ararat, for chemically sensitive mum, little girls, elderly dog, chooks. Ample water (nappies), baby friendly, organic, private, room to spread, reasonable long-term rental. Ph: 03-5352-4075.

SHEPPARTON, VIC, 1 or 2 b/s, bungalow perhaps, something with a bit of character would be nice. For quiet living, n/s, 26 y/o who won't kill your garden. Ph: 0417-579-528.

WANTED

WORK FOR COUPLE. He: Gold Card painter, complete house maintenance, versatile worker. She: literacy enhancement teacher (primary, ESL, adult), great cook, fair cleaner. Both: good with children & animals. Will consider going almost anywhere, to do almost anything. Have own van, Jan '99 onwards. Write or ph: 07-3200-0139 Susan Garner, 127 Wishaw Road, NTH MACLEAN, Qld 4280.

PERSON(S), FEMALE PREFERRED, to share farmhouse on country property, north Tasmania. Low rent. Interest in gardening an advantage. Suit pensioner or migrant. Ph: 03-6368-1475.

INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY OR SIMILAR, male, 53, requests info. John Suite, 219-16 Cotham Rd, KEW 3101.

HANDCRAFTS

CRAFT WORKSHOP VIDEOS: Learn at home at your own pace from your personal, highly qualified instructor. VHS titles include spinning, weaving, beadwork, basketry, applique, tatting, knitting, crochet, lacemaking, felting, fabric painting and more. For full catalogue send long SAE to: Quick Spin Wool, Dept GR, RMB 1215, Shelford Rd, MEREDITH 3333. Ph/fax: 03-5286-8224.

WAX SUPPLIES for all crafts, candle, beeswax, sealing wax, sculpturing & colour dyes, wick, polish and advice. Ring or write: Handful Wax, PO Box 87, LAKE MUNMORAH 2259. Ph: 02-4358-1224.

CLASSIFIEDS

HANDCRAFTS

HAVING DIFFICULTIES OBTAINING small gauge brass screws, hinges, catches, and associated brass fittings? We have an extensive range of 0g, 1g, 2g, 3g, etc from 1/4" long to 1". Also various woodworking tools, glues and abrasives. Backed up by a sharpening service. Send \$3 for catalogue (refundable off 1st order). East Gippsland Saw Service, PO Box 1168, BAIRNSDALE 3875. Ph/fax: 03-5152-1001.

BEADS! BEADS! BEADS! Unique selections of handmade glass, metal and wooden beads. Also findings, threads and kits available. Cost \$8 for samples, colour copy and info. Write to: Tsunami, PO Box 29, MARGARET RIVER 6285.

THREAD BUNDLES, **Clearance sale** Stranded cotton in bundles of 100 x 8 m skeins in 50 assorted colours. Shades matched to DMC - \$20 post free. The Big Bundle of Stranded Cotton of 240 colours - \$50 post free. Weaving reeds from 80c inch avail 8, 10, 12, 15 cents + post. Send 45c stamp for free price list. B/card, M/C, Visa, M/O, Chqs. Arty & Crafty, PO Box 40, DAW PARK, SA 5041. Ph: 08-8277-3763. Fax: 08-8276-2185.

'HOMeward HEARTS' CRAFT NEWSLETTER, handcrafts & homecraft for mothers, wives & home-makers. Encouragement & support for homeschoolers, & Christian women at home. Free sample newsletter send 2 stamps to: Mammy Jo, Homeward Hearts, PO Box 668, GYMPIE, Qld 4570.

HEALTH & BEAUTY

MAGNETIC FIELD THERAPY - Medical magnets for arthritis, sports injuries, headaches, neck, shoulder, back, feet & leg problems. Bio Mag Natural Living. Ph: 02-9587-2920 AH.

NATURAL DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS at discount rates. Oxichel, Emugen - Herbanol, Pharmaliance Products. Please send \$5 and SAE for sample tablet tray and brochures to: Brian O'Riley, PO Box 1351 MURRAY BRIDGE SA 5253, or ph: 08-8531-1411.

HANDMADE PURE VEGETABLE OIL SOAPS. These natural soaps are suitable for people who have sensitive or problem skin. For a product brochure send SAE to: Bushcraft Soaps, Lot 3 Counter Rd, M/S 591, GYMPIE 4570. Ph: 07-5486-7299.

MAKE YOUR OWN NATURAL SKIN CARE. Base ingredients (essential oils, healing vegie oils, beeswax, base creams & shampoos) avail from 'Eco-Nature' - nature product supplier. Shop 17A, Havelock Ave, COOGEE, Sydney. Wed-Fri 11-4.30, Sat 10 - 4.30. Also organic teas, garden goods, natural incense. Ph: 02-9664-6085.

HERBAL HELP for humans & horses (dogs & cats too). Ancient Polynesian remedy. Now avail here. Remarkable results possible. Ph: 03-5786-1979, 03-5659-0107.

HOMEOPATHIC KITS to assist your child's natural immunity. Covering 0-5 years. Full instructions incl. Send SAE for more info or \$45 incl postage for kit to: S L Products, PO Box 22 (16 Field St), ST TH CAULFIELD 3162.

**DEADLINES: GR 132 - FEBRUARY 28TH
GR 133 - APRIL 30TH**

WHAT'S MAKING YOU SICK? The truth and the lies revealed! Eleven page report on 'How to regain your health', food facts & manufacturers and the medical profession exposed. Take charge of your personal health today. Disease free is the only way to be. Send money order \$10 to: R. Bowman, 74 Elliott Heads Rd, BUNDABERG Qld 4670.

FOOD AND KITCHEN

BEE POLLEN, no additives, 450 g sample pack \$10. 1.9 kg pack \$35, 4.3 kg pack \$70, 14 kg drum \$185. Prices include p&p. JM Read, 8 River St, MURRAY BRIDGE, SA 5253.

HOME STONE FLOUR MILLS - mill your own stoneground wholemeal flour for cakes and bread at home with a Retsel Little Ark stone flour mill. Endorsed by Housewives Association. Write for catalogue to: Retsel Distributors, PO Box 712, DANDEMONG 3175, enc 3 postage stamps. Ph: 03-9795-2725. Distributor enquiries welcome.

WATER, PURE WATER, 100% hydrogen & oxygen. Just as nature intended. Invest in your health with a pure water distiller. Guaranteed to consistently produce pure water, free of bacteria, viruses & all other contaminants. Your body will love you. Also a range of home flour mills. Perfect flour from coarse to pastry-fine. Lifetime warranty. More info ph: Bread 'N' Water. Freecall: 1800-888-880.

MISCELLANEOUS

HELP SAVE KAKADU from the Jabiluka uranium mine. Ring the Jabiluka Hotline now: 1300-360-565.

HANDYMEN WANTED! Full or part-time. Three different almost unknown businesses you can run from home. No opposition. I've retired so the secrets can be yours. No canvassing or mail order. Start with \$50 capital. Details free. Send SAE to Peter Gardner, 13 Harlequin St (PO Box 571), LIGHTNING RIDGE 2834.

TRIDENT TIPIS. Professional workmanship, quality materials, traditional designs. For brochure, samples and prices write to: 'Earth Mother Craft', Lot 107, Cedar Creek Road, via MILLFIELD, 2325. Ph: 049-981-659.

NATURAL SKIN CARE PRODUCTS, hand-made soaps & candles. Send SAE for catalogue of over 120 products. Forest Edge, 242 Albert St, MARYBOROUGH 4650.

RADIATION-FREE SMOKE ALARMS, battery (\$45) or mains (\$52), photoelectric, postage \$4.50. Ph: 03-5154-0151. 3D Lights, RSD GOONGERAH 3888.

FOR SALE INVERTER (Latronics), 1500VA, surge 6000VA mod sign wave. Excellent condition. \$1600 ONO. Ph: 02-6655-2319.

FRIDGE (24 volt Kelvinator), Impression Series, excel condition. \$1500 ONO. Ph: 02-6655-2319.

SEPTIC TANKS-HOW TO BUILD/ or how to maintain one. Don't desludge! Treat the cause. Booklet \$20. HG Stephens, PO Box 18, EAST MELBOURNE 3002. Ph: 03-9510-3192.

AMAZING MLM: No selling or recruiting necessary. We help build your downline. Just \$45pm buys a great nutritional product. Potentially EARN THOUSANDS. Free cascadia infopack, PO Box 249, NAMBOUR 4560, or 07-5476-1923.

CONTROLLER (Solarex Solar), SC-30m. \$240 ONO. Ph: 02-6655-2319.

TWENTY-FIVE SOLAR BATTERIES 6V (2V per cell), 95/10 amp hours, as-new condition. \$80 each ONO. Ph: 07-4741-1071, 07-4741-1393.

BOOKS, NEW AND PRELOVED, Herbs, Edible plants, Stamps, Coins, Penpals & much more. Free catalogues. TIC, Box E496, MORISSET, NSW 2264. Ph: 02-4970-5694.

WANTED - SOMEONE to live alongside Anglican community & share in the life & work on 44 ac property for 6 months from May 1999 or February 2000. Short trial visit necessary. Sisters of the Church, 42 Wirrang Dr, Dondingalong via KEMPSEY 2440.

HORSE-DRAWN GIGS (2). One restored, one 1/2 restored, 52 + 54" wheels. Must go. \$2500 the lot. Will sep. Bargain! Ph: 0417-579-528, SHEPPARTON, Vic.

TIPI, 10'-22', from \$460. Colonial tents, tarps, awnings, annexes, canopies, tonneau covers, swag rolls. Leather, deerskin, suede clothing, any size, any design, yours or ours. Western and Indian style fringed gear a speciality. Wholesale prices. Bojo Products, BENALLA. Ph: 03-5762-2145. Tipi hire avail.

TWENTY METRES SEAGRASS MATTING. Fire resistant, treated for rot. \$25. Ph: 03-5461-4803.

HOW TO MAKE MONEY selling & making chess pieces, bird baths, fine art, gnomes etc. Plaster and/or cement moulds. For methods + catalogue send \$14.95 to: PO Box 989, SOUTHPORT 4215 (06/50 Railway St). Ph/fax: 07-5532-9050.

PROVEN HOME-BASED BUSINESS that transforms lives and leads you to wealth. Not multi-level marketing or franchising. Join a team that's making a difference. For 24 hr message ph: 03-5448-8095.

COURSES

CORRESPONDENCE-PERMACULTURE DESIGN Course. On completion you will have a full permaculture design & management plan for a property of your choice - to suit your needs. For more info contact: Annie Jenkins, PO Box 2404, CAIRNS, QLD 4870. Ph: 015-631-927, or E-mail: nastus@hotmail.com

CORRESPONDENCE STUDIES. Diploma and certificate programmes, professionally recognised. Learn for personal interest or business practice. Select one brochure from: Aromatherapy, Vitamin & Nutrition therapy, Traditional Folk Medicine, Animal Medicine (The 'Green' Vet), Psychic Healing, Pre-school Childcare, Safety & Security Counselling, Personal Psychic Development, Traditional Wicca. New course: 'Herbs For All Ways And Always'. Wiccan Home Studies, PO Box 138, SURRY HILLS 2010. Ph: 02-9319-6166 BH only.

HERBAL MEDICINE. The School of Herbal Medicine, estab in Australia in 1985, offers a 1 year home study course. For details, write to PO Box 2310, TOOWOOMBA 4350.

GRASSIFIEDS

COURSES

PERMACULTURE IN A NUTSHELL. Introductory 1-day wshops conducted regularly at Djanbung Gardens Permaculture Centre, 2nd & 4th Saturday of every month, incl tours of Jarlanbah Permaculture Community. Details contact: Permaculture Education, PO Box 379 NIMBIN NSW 2480. Ph: 02-6689-1755.

PERMACULTURE - sustainable living & self-reliance courses & workshops with Robyn Francis & others, garden tours & resource centre, FREE copy of 1999 YEARBOOK. Contact Djanbung Gardens Permaculture Centre, NIMBIN. Ph/fax: 02-6689-1755.

ALTERNATIVE BUILDING - save \$1000s with eco-friendly house design & construction workshop June 13 - 14, Djanbung Permaculture Centre. Ph/fax: 02-6689-1755.

BUSHFOODS COURSE with Peter Hardwick, April 12 - 17, growing, harvest & use of food, spice & craft plants. Djanbung Permaculture Centre. Ph/fax: 02-6689-1755.

LEGALITIES FOR COMMUNITIES - ownership & management options, by-laws, liabilities etc. Special workshop with solicitor Wroth Wall, July 24. Djanbung Permaculture Centre. Ph/fax: 02-6689-1755.

LIVESTOCK

CATTLE: The British White Cattle Society of Australia Ltd, est 1983. New members welcomed. Get in on the ground floor now. Australian and imported bloodlines available. Enquiries to: PO Box 546, CABOOLTURE, Qld 4510. Ph: 075-496-8271 or 076-958-561.

MOHAIR GOATS (Angoras) gentle, easily managed & productive. For fibre, meat, organic weed control & companionship. Stud & commercial animals avail from \$60 pair. Stokesay Angora Stud, PEARCEDALE. Ph: 03-5978-6293.

DEXTER COWS IN CALF or calves at foot, all grades, from \$700. ROSEWOOD. Ph: 07-5464-1684.

BEGINNERS DRAUGHT HORSE DRIVING SCHOOLS - are regularly held when time and numbers permit. Hands-on weekend schools with 8-14 people drive up to 6 Clydesdales in a variety of vehicles and implements. Over 120 people have completed the schools since inauguration in 1994. For dates, details & application form contact: I Stewart-Koster, 'Highgrove', M/S 918, TOOWOOMBA MC 4352. Ph: 07-4692-8292.

GARDEN AND ORCHARD

BAMBOO: PLANTS - BOOKS - FLOORING, 250 species, running or clumping, 15 titles bamboo books. Bamboo flooring boards now in stock. Send \$4.50 in stamps for catalogue. Bamboo Australia, BELLI PARK, Qld 4562.

E-Mail: bamboo@bamboo.oz.com.au.

EARTHWORMS. FREE, the most comprehensive catalogue of books on this subject. Send a business size SAE to: Worm World, PO Box 204GR, ROLLINGSTONE, Qld 4816. Ph/fax: 07-4770-7001.

PLACING AN AD?
See page 74 for details

FREE \$4.50 packet of mixed gourd seeds when you purchase your new 52 page Gourd Growers Handbook \$18. Mixed packets, Ornamentals, Hardshells, Luffa sponge, Cannon Ball, Calabash, Bean, Bottle, Birdhouse, Goose, Maranka, Coloured Corn - \$4.50 packet. Minimum purchase \$9. Bulk pkt \$10 - 30 seeds. Giant Gourd mix - 9 seeds \$10 packet. All prices include p&p. Money back guarantee. Send your order to: The Gourdfather, PO Box 298GR, EAST MAITLAND 2323. Ph: 02-4933-6624. PS: Craft books also available.

COMPANION PLANTING CHART: Over 90 vegetables, herbs and fruits, including plants as insect repellants. SOW WHEN CHART: Suggested sowing times for 100 vegetables, herbs and flowers. Mail order \$7 each + \$3 p&p. Plum Products (G), PO Box 120, Wards Rd, TAMBO UPPER, 3885.

BAMBOO PLANTS, lge range, best prices. Ph: 07-4129-4470, fax: 07-4129-0130.

TREE GUARDS all shapes/sizes from under 10 cents each. Bamboo stakes and weedmats. International Reforestation Supplies, 510 Bellbird Rd, BAIRNSDALE 3875. Ph/fax: 03-5157-9404.

TOBACCO SEEDS selected from quality, best flavoured plants. Organically grown. Seeds and instructions \$5. E Madge, PO Box 114, POMONA, Qld 4568. (MS 626).

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CLUBS

NATIONAL ALLERGY ASSOCIATION of Australia (NAAA). Information, counselling, newsletter. For information and membership write to: PO Box 48, HARRIS PARK 2150.

PUBLICATIONS

DIY MANUALS ON MANY SUBJECTS pertaining to self-sustainability. Send stamped self-addressed envelope for detailed listing to: DMD Recycling Systems, ONGERUP 6336, WA.

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PLACING AN AD?
See page 74 for details

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HOME EDUCATION, for info send SAE to: Alternative Education Resource Group, PO Box 71, CHIRNSIDE PARK 3116.

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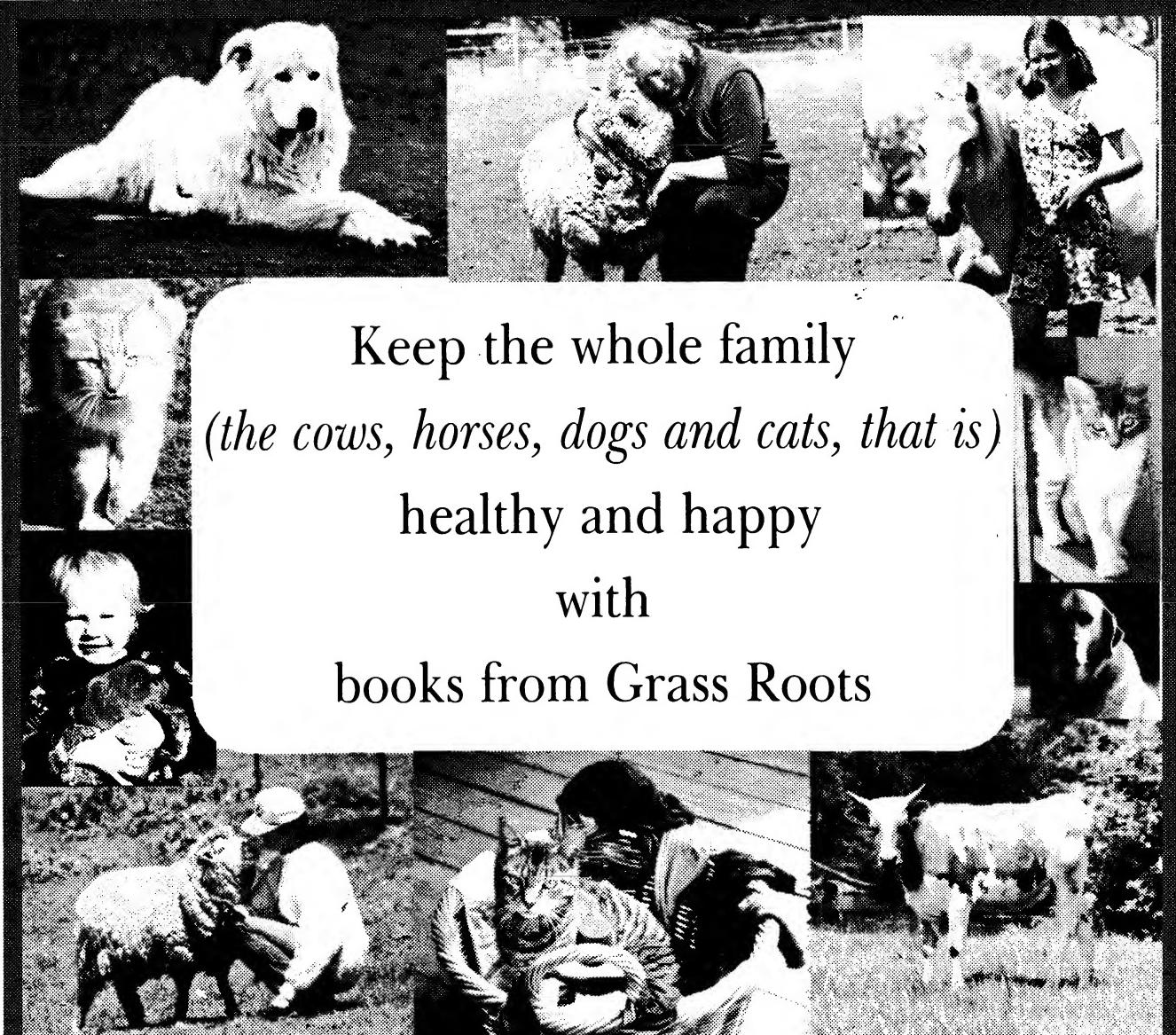


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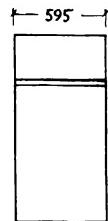
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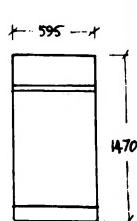
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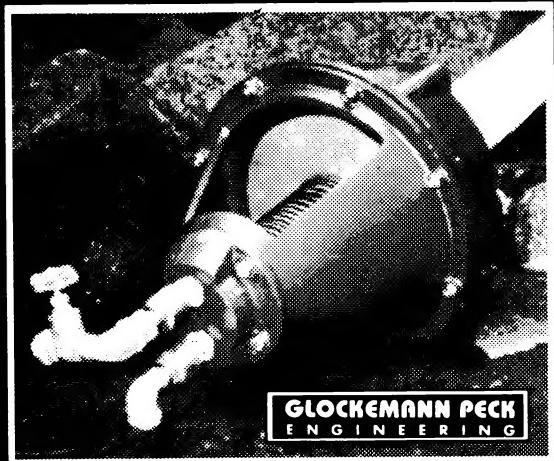


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